

# CINEFANTASTIQUE

March

\$5.95

CAN \$7.95

UK £4.20

**SPECIES' Sil, built in Hollywood by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc., design by H. R. Giger.**

## GIGER'S ALIEN

**FILMING "ALIENS: THE RIDE"**

**B-KING ROGER CORMAN**

**SPACE: ABOVE & BEYOND**

Volume 27 Number 7

03 >



64782

332050



# CINEFANTASTIQUE

## DARIO ARGENTO



### THE STENDHAL SYNDROME

# THE REVIEW OF HORROR FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION FILMS GOES MONTHLY

CINEFANTASTIQUE is now published each and every month, with issues jam-packed with the latest stories on the hottest films you want to see.

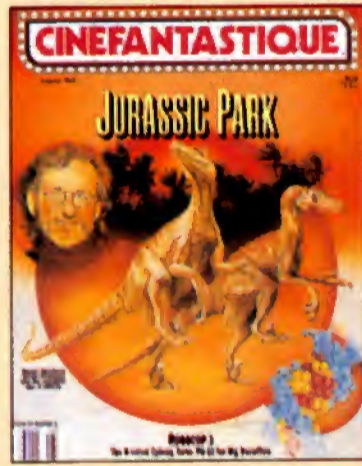
Don't miss our next issue which takes you to Rome and Florence, on the set of Italian horror meister Dario Argento's latest shocker THE STENDHAL SYNDROME. The director of horror classics like THE BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE and SUSPIRIA, Argento takes London correspondent Alan Jones behind-the-scenes to demonstrate the working methods that have made Argento one of the world's acknowledged masters of the macabre. Besides Argento, Jones interviews Italian cinematographer Giuseppe Rotunno, a frequent collaborator of the great Federico Fellini, Argento's beautiful daughter Asia, a continental movie star working with her father for a second time, and the artists and craftsmen behind Argento's twisted shock and makeup effects. Note the master director about his new horror: "Sick sex and violence, bloody horror, surreal fantasy and cruel shocks—it's all here in the most brutal movie I've ever made!" Don't miss it! Plus, filming Stephen King's THINNER.

Subscribe or renew today at the special low rate of just \$48 for the next 12 issues, and select one of the rare collector's back issues shown below as our free gift! Subscribe for two years (24 issues) for only \$90 (a savings of over \$50 off the newsstand price!) and take two back issues of your choice free! Act now, it doesn't get any better than this!

## Subscribe Now at Money-Saving Rates and Take Any Back Issue Below as Our Gift!



**Volume 24 Number 3/4**  
Our fourth annual recap of science fiction's first franchise, with an episode guide of the sixth season. **\$14.00**



**Volume 24 Number 2**  
Behind-the-scenes coverage of the production, plus ILM's groundbreaking computer graphics special effects dinosaurs. **\$8.00**



**Volume 16 Number 4/5**  
This special double issue features an in-depth 32-page retrospect on the making of Alfred Hitchcock's PSYCHO. **\$13.00**



**Volume 20 Number 1/2**  
The record-breaking BATMAN and the films of director Tim Burton are the focus of this double issue. Plus FIELD OF DREAMS. **\$20.00**



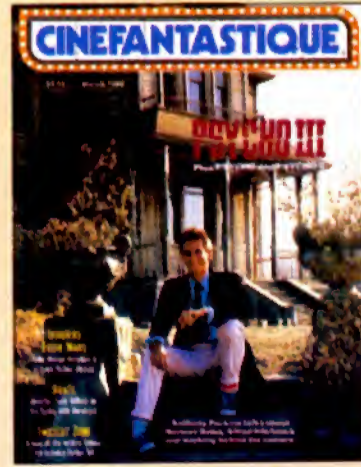
**Volume 12 Number 5/6**  
Issue-length stories on the making of STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN and an in-depth look at BLADE RUNNER. **\$13.00**



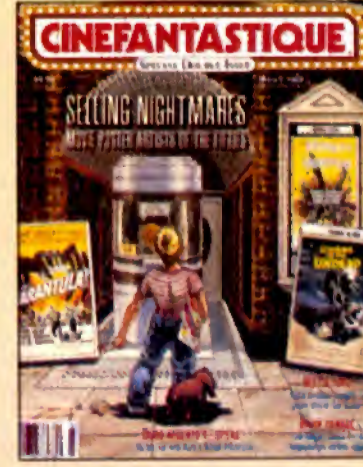
**Volume 14 Number 4/5**  
A mammoth 32-page production article on filming DUNE, plus a 32-page retrospect of David Lynch's ERASERHEAD. **\$13.00**



**Volume 15 Number 3**  
The story behind Tobe Hooper's LIFEFORCE, his first film since directing POLTERGEIST for Steven Spielberg. **\$8.00**



**Volume 16 Number 1**  
Anthony Perkins reprises his role as Norman Bates in the third PSYCHO installment and talks about his career. **\$8.00**



**Volume 18 Number 2/3**  
This special double issue spotlights the MOVIE POSTER ARTISTS OF THE '50S and their remarkable work. **\$13.00**



**Volume 16 Number 2**  
Aussie rock video stylist Russell Mulcahy's second directorial feature, HIGHLANDER, is the centerpiece of this stellar issue. **\$8.00**

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE, 1-800-798-6515 OR USE ORDER FORM, SEE PAGE 61



# CONTENTS

VOLUME 27 NUMBER 7

The magazine with a "Sense of Wonder."

MARCH 1996

This magazine has followed the career of H. R. Giger closely since 1979, when his Oscar-winning design work for ALIEN literally burst on the scene and changed the look of science fiction. This, our third cover story on the Swiss surrealist artist and film designer, takes a detailed look at his extraterrestrial concepts for last summer's hit movie SPECIES, now out on video.

L. A. correspondent Les Paul Robley interviewed Giger at his home and studio in Zurich, surrounded by the artist's work, which makes the building a kind of shrine or museum with exhibits that showcase Giger's unique biomechanoid vision, including a working, rideable train that snakes through its grounds. Giger spoke frankly about working in Hollywood and the compromises made on his designs for SPECIES. In separate articles, Robley, a working effects technician, details the motion simulator filming of ALIENS: THE RIDE and the CGI effects by Boss Film for SPECIES, projects on which he worked himself. Robley also spotlights the superb creature fabrication by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc., which highlights this issue's cover, as well as Giger's Ghost Train design that was all but dropped from SPECIES' final cut. In companion pieces, Dan Persons interviews Dennis Feldman, SPECIES' screenwriter and co-producer, and Dan Scapperotti profiles actress Natasha Henstridge, who talks about playing Giger's creature, a role that has catapulted her from fashion model to motion picture star.

When Giger saw the magazine's cover mockup, printed in our previous issue, with only his name listed above the title SPECIES, he called to ask—even implore—that his name be listed smaller, below the title, with only those of his many collaborators. "I am only the artist," he said, quite humbly. "I played but a small part in making the film." We call this issue "Giger's Alien" instead. Though Giger's designs may have been realized by others, his SPECIES monster is as much his as the Picasso, built by other craftsmen, that graces the Loop here in Chicago.

Frederick S. Clarke



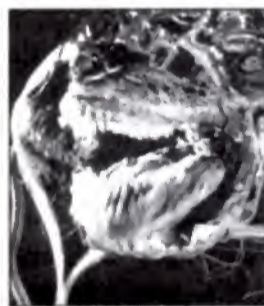
Page 8



Page 14



Page 23



Page 46



Page 54

## 8 DEMOLITIONIST

BAYWATCH babe Nicole Eggert stars as the future cop turned super crime-fighter in a comic book-inspired low-budgeter that marks the directing debut of KNB Efx's Rob Kurtzman. / *Preview by Michael Beeler*

## 10 MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND

Brian Henson on following in his late father's footsteps, returning the Muppet players to the kind of hip, irreverent comedy that made TV's THE MUPPET SHOW a hit. / *Interview by Alan Jones*

## 14 GIGER'S ALIEN: THE RIDE

Filming the motion simulator theme park attraction that puts you into the nightmare world of Giger, based on the movie ALIENS, directed by genre master Stuart Gordon. / *Article by Les Paul Robley*

## 16 H. R. GIGER—ORIGIN OF "SPECIES"

An interview with the Oscar-winning Swiss surrealist at his Zurich studio, the inside story on the making of the movie, the artistic compromises and the legal battles. / *Production story by Les Paul Robley*

## 23 BUILDING GIGER'S ALIEN

Makeup effects designer Steve Johnson on fabricating Giger's extra-terrestrial design for SPECIES' Sil to Giger's biomechanical specs, creating a deadly monster that's drop dead gorgeous. / *Article by Les Paul Robley*

## 32 "SPECIES" COMPUTER GRAPHICS

Boss Film supremo and special effects Oscar-winner Richard Edlund on the motion capture computerized puppetry used to bring Sil's superhuman feats startlingly to life. / *Article by Les Paul Robley*

## 39 GIGER'S GHOST TRAIN

The behind-the-scenes story of the nightmare sequence designed by Giger which got short shrift in SPECIES, a preview of the imagery in store when the train roars again in Giger's own pet project. / *Article by Les Paul Robley*

## 42 EXQUISITE TENDERNESS

Director Carl Schenkel on filming 1993's gory shocker which has been released overseas but buried in the U.S. market, a throwback to the noirish '60s horror of Italian master Mario Bava. / *Preview by Kenneth Winikoff*

## 46 ROGER CORMAN PRESENTS

The legendary "King of the Bs" on launching his new Cosmic Video genre label by packaging his series of cable movies currently airing on Showtime, a primer on how Corman does it for less. / *Interview by Dan Scapperotti*

## 54 SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND

A profile of Area 51, computer effects' next generation currently providing Fox's saga of interstellar warfare with stunningly realistic, STAR WARS-like outer space dogfights on a TV series budget. / *Article by Paula Vitaris*

5 HOLLYWOOD  
GOTHIC

12 COMING  
ATTRACTIONS

59 REVIEWS

62 LETTERS

**Publisher & Editor:** Frederick S. Clarke. **Editor:** Steve Biodrowski. **Bureaus:** New York/Dan Scapperotti, Dan Persons. Los Angeles/ Michael Beeler. London/ Alan Jones. **Contributors:** Lawrence French, Nancy Garcia, Judith P. Harris, Les Paul Robley, Michael Sutton, John Thonen, Paula Vitaris, Kenneth Winikoff. **Editorial Operations Manager:** Elaine Fiedler. **Editorial Production:** Lisa Tomczak-Walkington. **Production Associate:** Ruth Kopala. **Publisher's Assistant:** Lisa Coduto. **Circulation:** Reva Patterson. **Business Manager:** Celeste Casey Clarke.

**PHOTO CREDITS:** ©1994 Atelier Formant (16L, 18BR, 18CR, 29BR); ©1995 Bad Bird (Robert Zucherman 6); ©1995 Leslie Barany (Mia Bonzanigo 20R); ©1993 Capella (Bob Akester 42-45); ©1993 Dana Frank (16R); Suzanne Englund (47BR, 50); © Fox (Aaron Rapoport 60); ©1995 H. R. Giger (17, 18TR, 20L, 21; Sascha L. Serfoe 19, 29L, 41; Roman Guttinger 40T); David Goldner (48BL); ©1995 Gramercy (Michael Kienitz 4T); Bruce Heinsius (51T); © Jim Henson Prod. (Stephen F. Morley 10, 11); ©1995 MGM (23-26, 29I, 32-34; Melinda Sue Gordon 16C, 22, 26C, 26TR, 27, 31, 35T, 36, 37; Virgil Mirano (33R, 34B); ©1993 187 Corp (Elliott Marks 46I); ©1986 20th Century Fox (15); Libby Simon (12); Paula Vitaris (54, 57B); ©1992 Willy Spiller (28).

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Area 51, Leslie Barany, Boss Films, Catherine Cyran, Dennis Feldman, H.R. Giger, Jonathan Winfrey, Terry Winkless, XFX Inc. **COVER:** Mindas

CINEFANTASTIQUE (ISSN 0145-6032) is published monthly at 7240 W. Roosevelt Rd., Forest Park, IL 60130. (708) 366-5566. Second class postage paid at Forest Park, IL 60130 & additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to CINEFANTASTIQUE, P.O. Box 270, Oak Park, IL 60303. **Subscriptions:** 12 Issues \$48, 18 issues \$69, 24 Issues \$90. (Foreign & Canada: 12 Issues \$55, 18 issues \$80, 24 Issues \$100.) Single copies: \$8. **Retail Distribution:** In the U.S. by Eastern News Distributors, 250 W. 55th St., New York, NY 10019. (800) 221-3148. In Great Britain by Titan Distributors, P.O. Box 250, London E3 4RT. Phone: (01)980-6167. **Submissions** of artwork and articles are encouraged, but must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Contents copyright ©1996 by Frederick S. Clarke. CINEFANTASTIQUE® is a Registered U.S. Trademark. **PRINTED IN USA.**



## EAGERLY AWAITED

### MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000: THE MOVIE (Gramercy)

THIS ISLAND EARTH finally gets the MSTreatment, which it probably doesn't deserve. Nevertheless, let's hope that the '50s film's fine technicolor production values elevate the viewing experience and make this feature version of the television show worthy of the big screen. Jim Mallon produced and directed. Mike Nelson stars, and Trace Beaulieu is back as the evil Dr. Clayton Forrester. Neither Joel Hodgson nor Frank Coniff, both of whom have left the show, are involved in the movie.

April



### BORDELLO OF BLOOD (Universal)

August

In what would have been a notable coincidence, Universal had planned to release this second TALES FROM THE CRYPT feature, a vampire film set in a bordello, during the same month as FROM DUSK TILL DAWN (see below), a vampire film set in a strip bar. But in a showdown with Miramax, Universal blinked, pushing back the release and allowing more time for fine-tuning in post-production. Said visual effects supervisor John Van Vliet, "The first screening was really amazing. When you're on the set for an action-horror picture, standing up to your neck in everything, you think, 'How the hell is any of this going to go together?' They've got an editor on this who's a real miracle worker. He's basically sewing this thing into an 80-minute roller coaster ride." **Frederick C. Szebin**

### CEMETERY MAN (October)

March 1

Is this a formula for hilarity or what? This guy (Rupert Everett) works in a cemetery where the dead come back to life, so he has to shoot them in the head and rebury them. Just when he's re-killed all of them, more people die, so he has to shoot them, too. Then more people die, and he shoots them. Then a whole bus load of people die, and he shoots them, too. And so on and so on, ad infinitum. SEE CFQ 25:5

### DIABOLIQUE (Warners)

March 29

Amongst art house and foreign film fans, George Clouzot had a reputation rivaling that of Alfred Hitchcock when it came to directing thrillers in the '50s, and DIABOLIQUE is his most famous creation, a thriller about a murder victim whose body disappears, leaving the wife and mistress who killed him to wonder whether he has come back from the dead. The plot, with its twist ending, has served as inspiration for numerous American films, including Curtis Harrington's GAMES (1967). Now it has been remade, with Isabelle Adjani and Sharon Stone as the wife and mistress, respectively. The casting is perfect, but can the story still surprise and shock us, when its novelty has been stolen by so many intervening productions?

### FROM DUSK TILL DAWN (Dimension)

Now Playing

Quentin Tarantino's first commissioned script—an intentional piece of exploitation horror—finally made it to the screen under the direction of Robert Rodriguez. Having been conceived years ago, it's no surprise that the film is not part of the current trend (a la BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA and INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE) of portraying sensitive, existential vampires. "They don't have a soul or a personality amongst them, or if they do we never get a chance to see it in the course of our battle with them," said Tarantino. "They're disgusting rodent creatures." SEE CFQ 27:4-5 **Michael Beeler**

### HELLRAISER: BLOODLINE (Dimension)

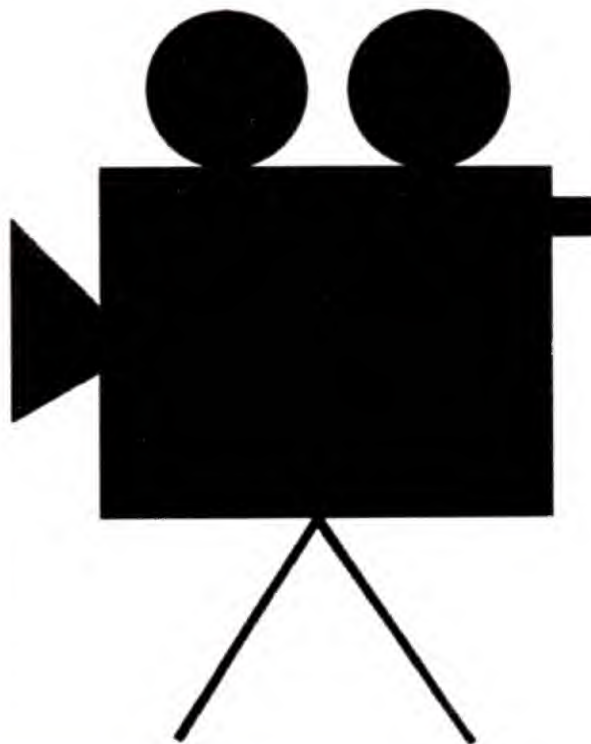
March 8

What was to have been the third Clive Barker horror film of 1995 finally arrives this year, having missed previously announced release dates in August and November. Late last year, Barker said, "There are some people in the studio right now shooting some extra scenes for HELLRAISER IV, and Pinhead is there looking magnificent and doing his shtick, but it is Pinhead, who's been

# RELEASE SCHEDULE

Upcoming cinefantastique at a glance, along with a word or two for the discriminating viewer.

compiled by Jay Stevenson  
(unless otherwise noted)



around for the best part of ten years. And how scary can that be, after multiple exposures? One of the things we're trying to do in HELLRAISER IV is freshen that up a bit. I don't have a lot to do with that movie; it's going its own way. I'm much keener to go off and do something fresh each time. That's potentially much more creative, much more fun, and, I think, scarier for the audience." SEE CFQ 27:2 **Denise Dumars**

### MARY REILLY (Tri-Star)

February 23

This is going to sound like *deja vu*, but this variation on the Jekyll-and-Hyde story has been delayed again, this time from a planned February 2 opening. But here's a new wrinkle: the explanation for this delay is that the studio's attempt to restructure the film resulted in such an incoherent mess that the film has been restored to director Stephen Frears' original cut. SEE CFQ 26:3

### MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND (Buena Vista)

February 16

After their success with THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL, Jim Henson's Creature Shop tackles another classic. This time it's Robert Louis Stevenson's tale of pirates, shipwrecks, and buried treasure to which the Muppet repertory company have turned their musical attentions. Having shot the film completely on sound



stages at Shepperton Studios in London, director Brian Henson said, "It's the most expensive, irreverent, and epic Muppet undertaking yet. It's also the hippest, with Scottish comedian Billy Connolly and Jennifer Saunders (TV's ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS) joining Tim Curry as Long John Silver." SEE PAGE 10 **Alan Jones**

### UNFORGETTABLE (MGM)

February 23

A medical examiner (Ray Liotta) searches for his wife's murderer, aided by a medical researcher (Linda Fiorentino) who has developed a formula that will enable him to experience the memories of those who can help solve the crime. John Dahl directed, from a script co-written with his brother, Rick, based on a story by Bill



## DIMINISHING RETURNS

### THINNER (Paramount)

The previous Stephen King horror film, THE MANGLER, disappeared without a trace; even the more upscale NEEDFUL THINGS, backed by a major studio's clout, barely managed a \$13 million domestic gross. Director Tom Holland's big genre successes, FRIGHT NIGHT and CHILD'S PLAY, rode the '80s' wave of effects-oriented teen flicks, but his '90s attempt at an adult mainstream thriller, THE TEMP, tanked at the boxoffice. Can these two talents, combined, regain their lost boxoffice ascendancy? Scriptor Michael McDowell (BEETLEJUICE) adapted King's 1985 novel, written under his Richard Bachman pseudonym: an overweight man (ROBOCOP 3's Robert John Burke)'s considerable bulk dwindles away to nothing under a gypsy's curse.

April



# HOLLYWOOD GOTHIC

## JAMES & THE GIANT PEACH

Henry Selick reanimates stop-motion.

by Lawrence French

Fans of stop-motion animation can rejoice. Not since Ray Harryhausen's heyday has the field seen such a dramatic renaissance. Credit for this revival is largely due to the success of Tim Burton's *THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS*, which arguably received the best critical reception for any stop-motion film since *KING KONG*. That success has allowed *NIGHTMARE*'s director, Henry Selick, to form his own animation studio, Twitching Image, where he plans to embark on a series of stop-motion features to be financed by Disney-owned Miramax. At the same time, Burton will be using extensive stop-motion sequences for *MARS ATTACKS*. Burton is planning to set up a separate stop-motion facility in the San Francisco bay area, with *THE CORPSE BRIDE* slated as its first production.

### Production Starts

#### HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER, PART 2

Just what we needed: an illegitimate sequel (neither director nor star are returning) to one of the most over-rated horror films of the '80s.

#### PRINCE OF EGYPT

DreamWorks' first animated feature, already in the works, but can Jeffrey Katzenberg recreate the magic he captured during his tenure at Disney?

#### QUEST FOR THE GRAIL

Warner Bros. hasn't let the disappointment of their Bluth efforts, *THUMBELINA* and *A TROLL IN CENTRAL PARK*, scare them out of the feature animation business.

#### SNOW WHITE IN THE BLACK FOREST

Sigourney Weaver and Sam Neill star in this live-action adaptation of the classic fairy tale, being filmed in the Czech Republic.

#### THE VAMPYRE WAR

This low-budget horror effort, filming on the Universal Studios lot in Orlando, Florida, features an impressive cast: Chris Sarandon, Maximilian Schell, Amanda Plummer, and Robert Englund. Hugh Parks directs, from a script by William Malone and Jeffery Ward.



Henry Selick directs a scene with child actor Paul Terry in *JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH*, which combines stop-motion and live action sequences.

Before going their separate ways, Burton and Selick have adapted late British author Roald Dahl's 1961 children's story, *James and the Giant Peach*, for Disney. With its menagerie of talking insects living inside an enormous peach, the book seemed a perfect match for the stop-motion process Selick had refined while making *NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS*.

"Disney acquired the rights in 1992, while Henry and Tim were making *NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS*," explained producer Brian Rosen. "Tim had asked Henry if there was anything else he wanted to do, and Henry said, *James and the Giant Peach*. Tim then

used his clout to get Disney to purchase the rights." Although Burton helped put the deal together, according to Rosen, "He was not creatively involved."

Rosen expects the film, scheduled for release in April, will appeal not only to children but to many adults who were first exposed to the book as children. "We'll have an audience of several generations. A lot of times when you've read the book, the film doesn't live up to your expectations. I think when people see our bugs, they'll say, 'That's exactly how I imagined them.' They're just fabulous creatures that look quite wonderful in the stop-motion world." □

## Short Notes

Well, it's official: Steve Spielberg will direct *THE LOST WORLD*, adapted from Michael Crichton's *JURASSIC PARK* sequel. Although David Koepp had been working on the script for months, even before the book's publication, it had been unknown whether Spielberg would direct or just step back and produce. Universal plans to start shooting in September and release the film as their summer "event" in 1997. ♣ Grand Design's 20-minute short, *FOR THE CAUSE* (reported last issue), has paid off with a two-pic deal from Miramax's Dimension division. The team of four filmmakers—director David March Douglas, producer Kia Jam, director of photography Christopher Holt, and visual effects supervisor Tim Douglas (David's younger brother)—will receive \$500,000 a year to create quality, mid-budget science-fiction action films. ♣ *BATMAN FOREVER*'S Val Kilmer has been asked to play Simon Templar in Paramount's big screen *THE SAINT*. □

## MARS ATTACKS —again!

by Chuck Wagner

"Watch the skies!" That was the final warning from the 1951 science-fiction classic *THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD*. At a time when a wave of UFO sightings was swelling across the nation, those seemed good words to live by. It was during this period that a young man named Len Brown began his career. Working for Topps, he and a dedicated team went on in 1962 to create perhaps the ultimate ode to late '50s paranoia: the infamously gory *Mars Attacks!* bubble gum card series.

Now, three decades later, Tim Burton will revive the terror. Next winter, Warner Bros plans to release his big-screen live-action version of *MARS ATTACKS!* "I think Tim Burton is the perfect producer-director for this kind of material," said Len Brown, of seeing his creation receive the Hollywood treatment. "I couldn't be more pleased. His love of fantasy, dark humor, and his particular brand of genius will be something to marvel at, I'm sure. We hear the Martians are going to be computer-generated animation. Wow, I can hardly wait! I just know he'll knock our collective socks off with the ultimate 'invasion from space' motion picture. And he also has an option for *Dinosaurs Attack!* So we may have something else to look forward to, before the century comes to a close."

*Dinosaurs Attack!* is the '80s follow up to *Mars Attacks!*—though designed with a more self-consciously satirical attitude toward its gory content. One can see a potential gusher of entertainment coming from the relationship between Burton and Topps. But how did this relationship get formed? "Basically, his talent agency, CAA, also represents Topps," Brown explained. "So, I guess it was kind of a natural thing to try to put some sort of deal together. Believe it or not, this was the second time that *Dinosaurs Attack!* was optioned by a filmmaker. Joe Dante had an option several years ago; he was hoping to get it out before *JURASSIC PARK*, but nothing happened and the option expired." With Burton now at the helm, we can expect a truly bizarre nostalgic recreation of '50s flying saucer movies. *Keep watching the skies!* □



## Obituaries

by David Wilt & Jay Stevenson

### Terry Southern

The 71-year-old novelist and Oscar-nominated screenwriter died in October of respiratory failure. He gained his greatest attention during the 1960s for his irreverent brand of satire, which was perfectly suited to the era. Some memorable examples are *THE LOVED ONE* (1965) and *EASY RIDER* (1969), but he also contributed to several genre scripts, including *DR. STRANGELOVE OR HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE BOMB* (with Stanley Kubrick, 1964) and *BARBARELLA* (with Roger Vadim, 1968); and *THE MAGIC CHRISTIAN* (adapted from his own novel in 1969) contains some fantasy sequences (including a cameo by Christopher Lee as the "Shipboard Vampire," who bears a suspicious resemblance to Dracula). It's a little bit hard to isolate Southern's contribution to the genre, since he was collaborating with established auteurs whose own personality suffused their work. Still, it was apparent that he brought his brand of black comedy to the dialogue. For example, who can ever forget Jack T. Ripper (Sterling Hayden)'s paranoid concern for his "precious bodily fluids" in *STRANGELOVE*?

### Abel Salazar

The producer largely responsible for the Mexican horror film boom of the late 1950s and early 1960s died October 21 in Cuernavaca, Mexico; he was 78. Salazar began acting in 1941 and produced his first film in 1943. Over the next five decades, he earned more than 80 film credits as an actor, producer, and director. In 1957, inspired by the success of Universal's horror films of the 1930s, he produced *EL VAMPIRO*

# THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS

*Sequel goes before the cameras under the direction of first-timer Tim Pope.*



Director Tim Pope, helmer of the *CROW* sequel, is a veteran of MTV videos, so it was natural to cast punk rocker Iggy Pop in a supporting role as a villain.

(*THE VAMPIRE*). This picture was so successful that over the next four years he made seven more fantasy films: *THE VAMPIRE'S COFFIN*, *THE MAN AND THE MONSTER*, *THE WORLD OF THE VAMPIRES*, *THE WITCH'S MIRROR*, *THE BRAINIAC*, *THE LIVING HEAD*, and *THE CURSE OF THE CRYING WOMAN*. After being admitted to the director's union in 1965, Salazar phased out his acting career and became a full-time director. He made his last film in 1989.

### Aneta Coursaut

The 62-year-old actress died November 6 of cancer. Although best known for playing Andy Tay-

lor's girlfriend on *THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW*, she is well remembered by genre fans for her single feature: 1958's *THE BLOB*, in which she co-starred with Steven (later Steve) McQueen. Although Coursaut was prone to disparaging remarks about the film later in her career, she wasn't half bad in the memorable little movie—no masterpiece, to be sure, but an entertaining relic of the '50s.

### Rosalind Cash

The veteran actress died of cancer, at age 56. The recipient of the Black American Cinema Society's Phoenix Award for achievement in motion pictures, she played a variety of roles on television, stage, and screen, including several genre productions: *THE OMEGA MAN* (1971), *THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI ACROSS THE 8TH DIMENSION* (1984), and two for producer Darin Scott, *FROM A WHISPER TO A SCREAM* (1989) and *TALES FROM THE HOOD* (1995).

### Christopher Stone

The actor-husband of Dee Wallace Stone died of a heart attack on October 29. He appeared in two horror films with his wife (*THE HOWLING* in 1980 [before their marriage] and *CUJO* in 1983), plus *THE ANNIHILATORS*, *AIRWOLF*, and *FANTASY ISLAND*. □

by Steve Biodrowski

*THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS* began production this fall in Los Angeles. Vincent Perez (*QUEEN MARGOT*) stars as Ashe, a murdered single father who is resurrected by the eponymous bird and falls in love with Sarah (the only returning character from the first film, now a young woman played by Mia Kirshner) while seeking vengeance.

Tim Pope makes his feature directing debut, working from a script by David Goyer, inspired by James O'Barr's graphic novel. Pope's previous experience was directing videos for such rock artists as The Cure and Iggy Pop. Of course, there have been a lot of bad films perpetrated by video directors; but Alex Proyas, coming from a similar background, didn't do a bad job on the first film, and there is something about the *CROW* mythos that lends itself to rock-and-roll (e.g., along with poetry selections from Rimbaud and Voltaire, O'Barr's original incorporates lyrics from The Cure and Joy Division).

"I've been working with myself not just to make an extended video, which is why we worked very long and hard on the characters," said Pope from the Universal Studios backlot, where the production recreated L.A.'s traditional Day of the Dead celebration. "Every decision we made is because of the characters, so I hope I bring something different from what other video directors would bring." Still, one thing Pope does bring from his video background is the casting of Iggy Pop as one of the villains. Pope describes the casting as "pretty damn wild," adding, "I think a lot of people want to see him getting down and dirty."

Getting the villains down and dirty will be an important part of the new story; after all, it's hard to generate suspense when the protagonist is an invincible returnee from beyond the grave. Of meeting this challenge, scripter Goyer said, "We get to know the villains and their agenda a lot more than [in the first film]. That is something we did deliberately, so we may spend as much time with them as with the heroes, because it is also about how the legend of the crow affects each one of them." □

## Monster in the Museum

by Nancy Garcia

Producer Gale Anne Hurd was in Chicago this October, shooting locations for *THE RELIC*, a new science-fiction horror film directed by Peter Hyams (*TIME COP*) from a script by Amy Holden Jones and John Raffo, with special effects by Stan Winston. Production will finish in Los Angeles, and Paramount is planning a summer release. Based on Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child's 1995 novel, the story could be called "ALIEN Meets JURASSIC PARK in New York City." Though the script makes changes (like moving the locale to Chicago), the story remains the same: an archeological expedition, searching for traces of an extinct Amazonian tribe, ends in disaster, and the few artifacts sent home get buried in storage and forgotten for years. Just before the opening of an exhibit on superstition, featuring one of the artifacts, a monster begins stalking the halls of the museum and savagely mutilating bodies. Penelope Ann Miller stars as a biologist who teams up with a police lieutenant (Tom Sizemore) and discovers the link between the odd figurine, the killings, and the ill-fated expedition.





# STENDHAL SYNDROME

## Argento returns to hard-core horror—no more mister nice guy.

*Preview by Alan Jones*

Audiences are waiting for something different. American horror seems to have run its course—it's nothing but sequels and irony—and people are looking elsewhere for directional ideas. I can only make what I feel is right for the moment and hope audiences agree." So speaks Dario Argento, the Italian Master of Terror. And he's prepared to deliver with his latest, highly anticipated giallo picture, **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME**, premiering February 1996 in Rome.

He continued, "No more 'soft' horror for me. My fans complained about **TWO EVIL EYES** and **TRAUMA**, because they weren't strong enough. In **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME**, I'm going to please myself for a change, not American financiers who say they want a Dario Argento picture and then water down or cut out everything I'm famous for. I've ignored my core Italian audience far too long by concentrating on breaking into the American market. Enough—it's over. **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME** finds me back where I belong on the cutting edge of hard, graphic horror. What eventual rating this will get in other countries I refuse to be concerned about. Italy is my priority, and I'll take it from there."

Budgeted at \$6 million, **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME** is the wildest conceit Argento has ever concocted in a long career packed with weird whodunnits and psyc-

delic fairy tales, ranging from **DEEP RED** to **SUSPIRIA**. But it is based on a startling fact: "Stendhal was an 18th century French novelist famous in literary circles for writing *The Scarlet and the Black* and *The Charterhouse of Parma*. But he's also famous for giving his name to a most unusual medical condition. When he visited Florence in 1817 and toured the art galleries, he was overcome by inexplicable emotions when he viewed certain works by Michelangelo and Giotto. He fainted clean away, overwhelmed by their total beauty. That has been termed the 'Stendhal Syndrome' ever since."

But what if that syndrome also caused split personalities, hallucinations, death wishes, and great physical strength as side effects? That's the crux of Argento's screenplay, which spins the psychologically complex tale of a Roman policewoman so affected by the syndrome that she physically enters famous paintings like Brueghel's

"The Fall of Icarus." By doing so she also falls into traps purposely set for her by a vicious serial killer.

Starring the director's award-winning daughter Asia Argento (**TRAUMA**) as policewoman Anna Manni and Thomas Kretschmann (**STALINGRAD**) as murderer Alfredo Grossi, **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME**

was shot by veteran cinematographer Giuseppe (WOLF) Rotunno entirely on location in Rome, Florence, and Viterbo for eight weeks last summer. Franco Casagni handled the extremely gory makeup effects (one involves a broken fingernail and an eyeball!), and Argento regular Sergio Stivaletti landed the computer graphic job of making Asia appear to float through the works of three key Old Masters. Argento remarked, "Sick sex and violence, bloody horror, surreal fantasy, and cruel shocks—it's all here in the most brutal movie I've ever made. The criminal mind is getting more violently devious, and I'm reflecting that reality in **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME**. This is not a movie for children or the faint-hearted."

However, there is an underlying theme explored. "Because the whole 'screen violence causes real violence' issue is still raging, I wanted to probe deeply into that argument," he said. "For years we've been told that culture is good for you and that Art can enrich our lives. But **THE STENDHAL SYNDROME** says 'Art is dangerous.'" □

Top of page: Director Dario Argento poses in front of Botticelli's *Venus*. Inset: His daughter, Asia, plays police officer Anna Manni, who discovers that great art is not always enriching.



# THE DEMO

## Nicole Eggert plays superheroine for Rob

By Michael  
Beeler

Filming in a seedy, little, hot box of an old brick building in the middle of a rancid part of downtown Los Angeles, the small film crew of *THE DEMOLITIONIST*, an A-Pix Entertainment production set for release in early 1996, seemed a bit stressed. The stress came from stretching a low \$1 million budget around an ambitious comic book concept and trying to shoot it in 24 days entirely on location in the Los Angeles area.

To offset some of their costs the production resorted to heavy product placement. Coca-Cola, in return for their products being prominently displayed in a number of scenes, kicked in some cash and also supplied the very young crew with unlimited cold drinks and some really cool antique styled ice chests.

Riding herd on the killer schedule was first-time director Robert (Bob) Kurtzman, who also co-wrote the original script with Anne, his lovely and gracious wife of four years. Kurtzman, a founding member of the KNB Efx Group, regarded as one of the

Kurtzman sets up a shot. One of the co-founders of Hollywood's KNB Efx Group, Kurtzman helped conceive the story and makes his directing debut.



*BAYWATCH*'S Eggert plays an undercover cop in futuristic Metro City who is butchered and left for dead after infiltrating Mad Dog's gang of criminals.

best special effects shops in films is no neophyte to low-budget filmmaking.

The premise for the film is simple. In the near future a bad guy named Mad Dog, played by Richard Grieco (21 *JUMP STREET*, *MARKER*), escapes from prison and takes over the streets of Metro City. Nicole Eggert, who reportedly had her silicone breast implants removed after leaving the shore line of *BAYWATCH*, plays Alyssa. She is killed by Mad Dog, then resurrected by the miracles of science and transformed into "the ultimate '90s female super hero."

"[*THE DEMOLITIONIST*] began as a project Bob and I wanted to do," explained Anne Kurtzman. "We wanted to get a film together that I could help produce and he could direct. We conceived it as something to be shot on a very low-budget shoot in his hometown in Ohio." Independent producer Don Borders got wind of the project last February and offered to set it up for Kurtzman in L.A. on a bigger budget for Border Planet Productions and A-Pix distributing. After six months of preproduction, filming began last August. At the time, Kurtzman was also supervising the effects for Quentin Tarantino's *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*.

According to Kurtzman, the shift from supervising effects to directing hasn't been a great leap. "The creative process is almost the same," said Kurtzman. "The only difference is that there is more stuff that you have to deal with. I really like it, but I'll probably go back to doing effects for a while until I get another gig as a director. But, honestly I would rather pursue directing."

Kurtzman cast *THE DEMOLITIONIST* with a number of his friends and work mates in supporting roles and cameos. Fellow makeup artist (and actor) Tom Savini portrays one of Mad Dog's mean, muscled, leather-clad henchmen. The cameos include Bruce Campbell, Ash of *THE*

*EVIL DEAD*, Reggie Banister of the *PHANTASM* series, and Heather Langenkamp of *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*, who plays a reporter.

"All the guys from the [KNB] shop are in this too," said Kurtzman. "They all look like bikers. One of the guys, Jake McKinnon, even shaved his head and eyebrows, and had a tattoo put on his head. We put a ring in his nose. The guys just went all out, totally getting into it."

When you consider the dismal track record of female heroines in feature films, you would think that Kurtzman would be a little bit apprehensive about doing this as his first project. *TANK GIRL*, with all of its hype still failed miserably, as did so many other vehicles that centered exclusively on female superheros. But Kurtzman said he's not worried. "I love the fact we're doing a female action hero," said Kurtzman. "And I think this one has balls. I think kids will go, 'Wow! She's cool!' I think they'll tune into it because she has all these great high tech gadgets. She's kind of like a Japanese animated cartoon come to life. I think it's got big crossover potential into other markets."

Even though Kurtzman is one of the top effects masters in the business, the film



# BLITZKRIEG

Kurtzman, makeup's wiz turned director.



John Bisson's gun-toting superheroine production design.

will not have many effects, only a few intense makeups and some pyrotechnics. The weaponry includes calcium carbide gas ignited guns of the fire-spitting type that were used in *LOGAN'S RUN*. Eggert's character will also make use of a high tech motorcycle and a lethal telescoping staff.

As it turned out, Eggert was very adept at twirling a baton so the scenes involving her fighting with the staff were heightened. "We asked [Eggert] if she had ever twirled a baton when she was young," said Anne Kurtzman, who admitted that a number of fencing scenes were dropped, simply because they didn't have the time to map out the choreography. "She was doing things with this staff that just blew you away. We have a lot of staff fights just because she looks so natural at it. She really sells it.

"She's doing a lot of her own kicking and a lot of her own stunts. We do have a couple doubles for her when she's riding the motorcycle because she's so small that you don't want to put her on a five hundred pound motorcycle when she barely weighs 100 pounds. She's doing as much of her own stunts as they'll let her do and she really wants to do more than that. And she's loving it." □

Eggert as the titular crimefighter, revived by the mayor of Metro City with a medical advance that gives her the powers of great speed and agility.







# TREASURE

## Return to the

By Alan Jones

"It's the most fun you can possibly have while being seasick," joked Kermit the Frog on the Shepperton Studios soundstage where *THE MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND* was filmed during the Summer of 1995. However, one look at the set and that one-liner takes on a very serious resonance. For high above the floor, perched on an impressive array of complicated mechanics, is the pirate ship *Hispaniola*, which must heave to and fro as Jim Henson's famous Muppet clan sail off to find Robert Louis Stevenson's equally famous *Treasure Island*. Walt Disney opens the film February 16.

Noted director Brian Henson, "Putting the Muppets on the ocean has been really difficult. Because our characters are all operated from below it was impossible to put the Muppets on a real boat. The only option was to raise the deck and that's why everything on this show has been built on stages. The *Hispaniola* isn't the most problematic one—the big beach set is, as it has to be, constantly flooded to provide the shoreline. But, at the same time, we've had to build six-foot holes in the sand for our Muppeteers, and they've had to be sealed so they won't leak. It's complicated stuff. *MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND* is the most difficult movie we've made and, because of the scale, the biggest and most expensive."

*MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND* has come about mainly because of the huge success of *THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL*. "It was an experiment to see if we could take our much-loved Muppet characters and cast them into other roles," said Henson. "We wanted to engender the same reaction with *Treasure Island*, only more so. Audiences know it's going to be fun but they don't exactly know what it's going to be like."

Top: Kermit as Captain Smollet. Middle: With Miss Piggy, who plays the Queen of a cutthroat island. Bottom: Tim Curry as Long John Silver, sailing on board Smollet's ship, the *Hispaniola*.





# MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND

looney, anarchic comedy of the TV show.

After jettisoning other story ideas—"All in the classic literature genre," remarked Henson—*Treasure Island* was finally chosen as the Muppet repertory company's next artistic foray. "*Treasure Island* worked best for casting the Muppets," said Henson. "We also wanted a story that moved a lot more and had thrilling action we could play with. MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND moves along at roller-coaster speed and is far more absurd than THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL. I think we've gone back to the more traditional Muppet irreverence this time out."

Written by Jerry Juhl, Jim Hart and Kirk Thatcher, MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND recounts the age-old tale of pirates, shipwrecks and treasure chests as young Jim Hawkins is given a long lost map illustrating the location of Captain Flint's buried fortune. Fourteen-year-old Kevin Bishop, makes his feature debut as Hawkins, the Benbow Inn's kitchen lad, supported by a cast of Muppet regulars. Other humans in the cast include comedians Billy (HEAD OF THE CLASS) Connolly as Billy Bones, Jennifer (ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS) Saunders as the formidable innkeeper, Mrs. Bulveridge, and Tim (CONGO, THE SHADOW) Curry as Long John Silver—minus a parrot but with a pet lobster called Polly instead.

"We took a trendy look at casting," said Henson. "Rather than go for the classic type we went for people with cult followings and cool reputations. I was very aware of making sure we kept ahead of our core audience. Original fans of THE MUPPET SHOW are now in their late 20s and into the type of comedy these three individuals represent. It was important our taste grew along with them."

Henson noted the difference between this and their previous outing. "In THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL, Michael



Following in his father's footsteps, director Brian Henson (l) on the set with cinematographer John Fenner, getting back to the Muppet's comedic roots.

Caine played off the Muppets as if they were all part of some oddball Royal Shakespeare Company," he said. "That was the right avenue for him and it created its own special brand of comedy. We required an actor to play the part of Scrooge seriously while the Muppets acted crazily around him. We went for totally the opposite reaction in MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND. The movie had to work for the comic artists and allow them to be more daring in their interpretations. Now everyone's crazy, but it's an exciting, fun mix. We're very tongue-in-cheek in this episode, but in a nice way."

So the Muppets get hip? Henson remarked, "We always were! That was the main problem with THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL. People started saying, and in a complimentary way I must point out, 'Well, isn't it great that the Muppets stand for basic family values.' Now, I have all the respect in the world for such sentiments, but it isn't what the Muppets are about. We stand for irreverence, being flip and iconoclastic. We've always been about taking a step back and not taking life so seriously. Jim Henson's public and personal credo was always look at yourself and be willing to change, be objective, yet keep

your mind open. MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND is our image reinvention. It's us going back to basics. I want it to turn life on its comedic head and make people think. That was part of the reason we chose *Treasure Island* in the first place because it works better for older audiences."

While Paul Williams wrote the songs and lyrics for THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL, MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND's contributions are the work of legendary '60s songwriters Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil. The husband and wife team have written such classic songs as "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" and "Uptown"

and more recently, wrote the scores for THE PAGEMASTER and ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN II. "They've written quite a scary number to open the movie," said Henson. "It's titled 'Shiver Me Timbers' and sets a spooky tone for a Muppet movie audiences won't be expecting. I think it will immediately let people know this isn't going to be your average or ordinary Muppet show."

MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND is Brian Henson's second feature after he made his directing debut with THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL. He's happily following in his late father's footsteps, but there's still one thing he can't do, as he explained, "Directing precludes me from performing. I do love performing and did it for years, but that's where my father was a genius. He could direct and Muppeteer a lead character like Kermit effortlessly. I can't do that. If I'm performing, that's where my head's at. If I'm directing, I'm in another frame of mind completely. I couldn't have performed on this even if I'd wanted to. While filming has progressed smoothly enough, considering, there have been huge challenges to face on a daily basis mainly because of the sheer scale of the operation. There hasn't been an easy day—ever!" □



# COMING

By Dan Persons

We're taking a page out of the STAR TREK: VOYAGER rule book this month, to wit: "When in doubt, invoke a temporal anomaly." We've got time-travelers galore for your edification: actresses reaching back into their careers for a wondrously disreputable big-screen send-up; executives seeking to influence the future of film exhibition with a cunningly designed simulator system; even a cartoon innovator who wants to do nothing less than *alter the past* (for the good of all mankind, of course). I tell ya, it's enough to make Captain Janeway unclench her jaw for, oh, three seconds, at least.

## HOW TO TAILOR A CELLULOID SUIT

You didn't really think John Kricfalusi was going to surrender Ren and Stimpy without a fight, did you? Citing an agreement struck with R&S network Nickelodeon in which the cable-caster promised to return marketing rights to John K. and his Spumco animation house four years after the series' debut, the creator/director of the animated duo has taken the broadcaster to court, suing them for \$100 million for attempting to withhold these rights. "We just want the rights, that's all," explained John K. "This is how they always operate: they make a deal with you, then they break the deal, then when you say, 'I want you to stick to your agreement,' they try to punish you on some other issue that has nothing to do with the agreement. Then they try to distract you from it by saying, 'Let's do some kind of a new agreement that supersedes the old agreement.' No, I just want them to live up to the old agreement."

Clearly, the massive quantities of money to be made from the cartoon characters serves as a strong motivation for this battle of marketing wills. Having previously cut his and his production team's teeth on a number of innovatively packaged toys for the Palmer Paint Company (and apparently having been given a free hand in the process: imagine a paint-by-numbers set that, approaching some sort of value-added apotheosis, offers not only the requisite art materials, but also an Official Artist certificate, cut-out masks, pencil-toppers, backward-masked secret messages and—they must've been working on pure adrenaline when they came up with this one—a specially-designed box of Sugar-Toasted Corn Waste cereal), Kricfalusi claims that he and his Spumco cohorts now have sufficient chops to carry the Ren and Stimpy product



REN & STIMPY creator John Kricfalusi, suing Nickelodeon to the tune of \$100 million to regain the merchandising rights to his characters.

line far beyond the terrain already charted out by the Nick marketing department. Beyond the lure of cold, hard cash, though, Kricfalusi claims a further motive: "I love toys. I love cartoon toys, and I have tons of them. I always wanted to make toys, be involved in the creation of toys with my own characters—it's like a life's dream. We want to do toys that reflect the show. Most of the stuff that's been done doesn't reflect the humor of the show. When you see the way we package our toys, they're fun. They're not just a representation of a famous cartoon character, we treat our products like products. Forget whether they're based on cartoons, they're just as fun as a cartoon. They're entertainment in themselves."

So what sort of fun will consumers be in for should Spumco succeed in wresting control from the Nick guys? Kricfalusi reports that, beyond the requisite dolls, videos, and t-shirts, other product concepts being seriously considered include a Magic Nose Goblins chess set, a Don't Whiz on the Electric Fence board game, and Stimpy's Gritty Kitty Cat Litter (packaged cereal-box style, with a free prize in every bag). Amongst products floated and eventually rejected: Stimpy-brand crotchless panties, and Ren and Stimpy Limited Edition Cigarettes. They're a wild bunch over at Spumco, but they aren't suicidal.

## ROCKING THE BOAT II

You had to *be* there in order to know it was there. You had to actually go to the Sony Multiplex in Ridgefield Park, New

Jersey—a decidedly opulent theater located, bizarrely, in a rather non-descript industrial park—to know that the Japanese communications giant was at work on its own motion-simulator exhibition system. For over a year, the company has conducted a low-profile marketing test of their Sony Movieglide simulation system at one end of the theater's cavernous lobby. Heartened by the response of theater patrons, the corp now plans a roll-out of the system to several more sites across the country, the first expected to open in the next few months.

Built mostly from off-the-rack components—the simulator itself is composed primarily of a Thompson Flight Training motion base souped-up with a Sony high-definition video projection system, high-powered audio and a custom-designed logic system—Sony Movieglide endeavors to simulate the full-immersion feel of a theme-park simulator in venues far removed from Orlando. Included in the experience: a string of video monitors pumping out entertainment for those waiting in line, a video-projection pre-show to set-up the audience for the simulator event, and then the ride itself, presented STAR TOURS-style in an enclosed capsule. Current shows are high-def adaptations of existing ride-films, many with motion-programming by the Truly Dangerous Company's Trey Stokes [see *CFQ*, 27:4/5:12]. Amongst the titles slated for screening on the system: ASTRO-CANYON COASTER (a CGI-generated, we-don't-need-no-stinkin'-safety-permit coaster ride set on the surface of a barren planet), SMASH FACTORY (a favorite amongst simulator fans, with specially dubbed Three Stooges narration), and PETER GABRIEL'S MIND-BLENDER (an unusual motion-simulator adaptation of the musician's KISS THAT FROG video-fable).

What visitors *shouldn't* expect are quick-and-dirty offerings that tie a camera to the front of a canoe and push the whole mess over Niagara Falls. "We're very selective," said Winston van Buitenan, EVP of Sony Entertainment Systems and the man responsible for getting the Movieglide ball rolling. "We don't do bob-sleds, we don't do roller-coasters. We don't do strictly thrill-based rides. Everything that we do has to have a narrative thread. The basis of the Movieglide theater is our belief that there are any number of ways to tell a story, especially as all of these technologies begin to manifest themselves, and the price-point of using these technologies become more within reason. We want to show features that are story-driven and have a high production value. I'd like to see more done on music; I'd like to



# ATTRactions

see a movie-ride feature done specifically for the holiday season, for instance.

"This is where the industry needs to mature to. I think it's been getting by on largely the novelty of the attraction and the technology. But we're seeing more and more story-driven properties, and I think we'll see a furtherance of that. And, to legitimize the medium, that's really where it needs to go."

Expect to see up to six Movieglide theaters appearing in non-cinema sites across the country within the next year. Those of you not lucky enough to have one opening near you will just be stuck with the old stand-by: watching a video of the car-chase from *THE FRENCH CONNECTION* while bouncing up-and-down on your waterbed.

## NEXT ON GERALDO: BLOOD-SUCKING SAG MEMBERS AND THE FANS THEY LOVE

How could you *not* want to see a film called *VAMPIRE CULT-QUEENS FROM HELL*? The ultimate come-on for your average, red-blooded fan-boy, it's a title that, blessedly, comes attached to a production with the potential to deliver the goods: a black comedy featuring three of filmdom's cultiest cult-queens in a story guaranteed to stir the imagination (and certain other portions) of the most rabid genre freak.

Starring Mary Woronov (*EATING RAOUL, NIGHT OF THE COMET*), Barbara Steele (*BLACK SUNDAY, SILENT SCREAM*), and Martine Beswick (*DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE*, and the priceless titled *DEVIL DOG: THE HOUND OF HELL*), *VAMPIRE CULT-QUEENS* tells the story of three beautiful, screen-vamps, a deadly trio whose nocturnal careers revolve around fan conventions, autograph sessions, and the occasional neck-nipping tryst back at their movie-set digs. According to Woronov, who also scripted the film, the whole project evolved out of a long-time friendship between the three principals. "I've been friends with them for a long time. Martine and I did the first movie that Oliver Stone ever directed, way, way back, called *SEIZURE*. I met Barbara through friends in Los Angeles, and I've done several things with her. Both



Barbara Steele (l), Mary Woronov and Martine Beswick (r), *VAMPIRE CULT-QUEENS FROM HELL*, three horror film femmes fatales teamed-up on their own project.

of them are wonderful, and we really like each other.

"We got this idea that if we did a movie with all three of us, it would definitely have a cult following. You know, we never seem to make money on these low-budget films. We just figured, why don't we do a film ourselves? I said, 'I bet you I could write it.' And that was it. The idea just boomed in my mind, and the script just kept pouring out. It was really quite easy to write."

The project is currently planned as a theatrical feature, slated to lens in the spring. Despite her having taken the *auteur* route this far, though, Woronov declined the temptation to sit in the director's chair (David Ebersol will direct, instead): "If I'm going to write it and act in it, it'd really be too much if I directed it, too - I don't want to be a pig. I don't feel that it's my place to tell these actresses what to do. Somebody else would really have to, especially if I'm acting with them. No, although I do have a strong vision of the film, I just can't see myself telling them what to do."

As for her co-stars, Woronov confides that both Steele and Beswick are looking forward to appearing in something with more brains and wit than what they've been recruited for in the recent past. "It's blossomed into this big film, and they're so ecstatic. They really do see it as the last time they're going to get out and act for everybody, because they're pretty fed-up."

## TRAILERS

When Will the Hurting Stop? Dept:

Warner's decided it's going to be called *BATMAN AND ROBIN*. They've also decided that, in addition to the rubber-enrobed heroes and Poison Ivy and Mr. Freeze, Batgirl will be introduced this go-around. Oh goody, *five egos* wrestling for screen-time. Who needs a coherent plot, anyway?...*MARS ATTACKS* is still awaiting production. Meanwhile, MA director Tim Burton has logged-on to helm a big-screen adaptation of Stephen Sondheim's *SWEENEY TODD*. The sardonic horror-opera about an urban-legend barber best known for slicing up his customers and dishing them out as meat pies is one of the composer's most

celebrated, and notorious, works, but it's not the only Sondheim musical on its way to the screen. Also in the planning stages: a collaboration between Columbia and Henson Productions on the only-slightly-happier *INTO THE WOODS*. Rob Minkoff will direct this one...

Yet another example of life imitating art: Nickelodeon has announced the upcoming premiere of *ANGRY BEAVERS*, an animated series which, according to the no-doubt carefully scribed and scrupulously vetted press release, is about "two beaver brothers who live together in a damn [sic] in the woods." Also announced, an intriguing alliance between *LOST IN SPACE* star Billy Mumy, and genre Renaissance man Peter David. The live-action SF adventure, *SPACE CASES*, is about a group of kids who accidentally warp their spaceship across the galaxy, and are faced with a seven-year trip back to their home system.

Reginald Hudlin, the guy who co-directed *HOUSE PARTY* (with his brother, Warrington), is developing a multi-racial, supernatural SF feature *EVIL IS BAD*, for New Line. Actors in Egypt are asking to be exempted from the county's strict gun-control laws. Seems the performers need the weapons to protect themselves from religious zealots who consider filmmaking a "sinful" pursuit, and have threatened stars with death. Consider this a wake-up call, Bob Dole...Maybe *BATMAN AND ROBIN* won't be so bad after all. Coming from Prism Pictures: *FRANKENSTEIN SINGS*. And Dan checks out. See you next time. □



# GIGER'S ALIEN: THE

## Filming the motion simulator ride based on

By Les Paul Robley

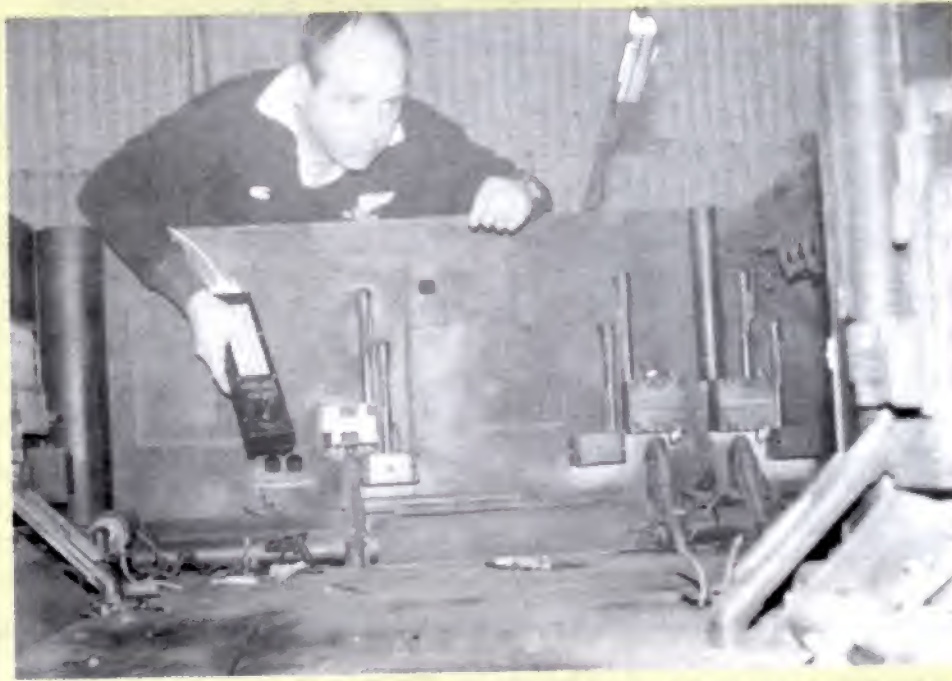
With ride-film attractions becoming more and more popular in theme parks, it seems only natural to base them on popular movies. There's STAR TOURS at Disneyland, BACK TO THE FUTURE at Universal Studios, THE RIGHT STUFF at Six Flags, ELVIRA'S GRAVEYARD SHIFT at Caesar's Palace, ROBOCOP: THE RIDE, Digital Domain's upcoming TERMINATOR 3D, and now, ALIENS: RIDE AT THE SPEED OF FRIGHT.

Produced by Praxis Films in association with Iwerks Entertainment, the company responsible for ROBOCOP, the new ride-film made its debut last year with 28 titles, at San Francisco's Pier 39, as well as three theatres in Japan. Iwerks has the most extensive library of simulation films in the industry with an installed base of theatres now exceeding 165. Directed by Stuart Gordon of RE-ANIMATOR fame, with cinematography by Paul Gentry, former effects supervisor at Full Moon Entertainment, the attraction features effects scenes from 20th Century-Fox's ALIENS, along with new footage created specifically for the ride.

"This will be a film beyond anything you've ever experienced," said director Gordon. "Not only will you see the action, you'll 'feel' it too. It really is the next generation of film experiences."

The pre-show begins with the discovery of a distraught marine who has lost his squad on the Alien planet. In flashback we see what happened to his squad during their routine check of the planet's colony. Corpses are everywhere, covered with the larvae of Aliens. Their only choice is to trigger a bomb. In ten hours it will wipe the planet clean.

But the squad itself is attacked by Aliens from all directions. The marines fire back and attempt to flee but the tunnel is clogged with debris. As the awful details of the survivor's story sink in, the marines interrogating him realize that some of the squad may still be trapped alive. With time running out on the ticking bomb, the marines board an



Filming ALIENS: RIDE AT THE SPEED OF FRIGHT, Les Paul Robley adjusts the motion control camera using a Kuper jogbox inside a trench miniature.

APC (Armored Personnel Carrier), steering it into a dropship on a rescue mission to hell.

You ride with them as they descend to the planet using footage from the original sequel. As we witness a point-of-view image on the screen, the APC tank crashes through the complex, now desolate and littered with debris. Each level we ascend finds acid holes covered with strange resinous material as the tank rumbles over things in its path. At one point we nearly fall into one of the huge acid blood holes. Following a faint distress signal, the marines find the wreckage of the other APC and they begin dragging wounded men from the rubble.

With only two minutes left, the Aliens awaken, coming out of the walls and ceiling to attack the men. You try to escape in the tank. The creatures give chase as your machine careens out of control around corners, banging into walls and over debris. A scene from the film shows one of the Aliens being crushed by the wheels. Someone in your squad yells: "Watch out for the hooolllee..." as your tank plummets and crashes through four levels of acid-eaten floors of lessening circumference. You finally land in the darkened egg chamber being guarded by the giant Alien Queen.

Iwerks' ride simulation theatres synchronize giant screen high-resolution movie images with high-tech motion bases. Gentry photographed the new material on 35mm

5248 VistaVision color negative film that has been optically enlarged to Iwerks large format 870 film (8-perforation 70mm film), a frame half the size of IMAX. VistaVision was chosen as the taking camera since an 8-perf 65mm would have been too large and bulky to use within the confines of the miniature. The aspect ratios of the two formats are very similar, with some side information lost on the VistaVision frame.

The sets consisted of life-size props and miniatures with no CGI used in the film. Iwerks ride-films of the past have relied on computer-generated effects which tend to lose realism when blown-up on their large

theatre projection screens. Thus, miniatures were chosen for a more realistic appearance. Heading the set design were artists who worked on the original ALIENS. The largely British crew used everything from ALIEN model kits to conduit flex to dress the sets, using *Giger's Alien* book as a logical source of reference material. The same trench was re-dressed for each level as the APC lumbered further into the organic ALIEN interiors.

A snorkel lens was mounted to the motion-control rig in order for the camera to navigate the tight confines of the 40-foot-long miniature trench. As many as 16 channels of axis movement were programmed into the computer using Kuper RTMC130 software by operator Les Paul Robley. Motion control makes up half of the four-minute ride, with some continuous shots lasting as long as 40 seconds. As the camera rounded corners or plowed through debris, wipes provided a means by which to transition each level of the trench.

A searchlight above the tank was operated by stepper motors and programmed via live encoder pan and tilt controllers into the shot. Flickering lights and interactive spark lights—used when the tank scraped against a wall—were programmed using the new DAC (digital-to-analog conversion) feature in the Kuper. The levels of these lights, along with practical stage lighting on the set, could be raised and lowered for each axis as a



# RIDE

## Fox's ALIENS.

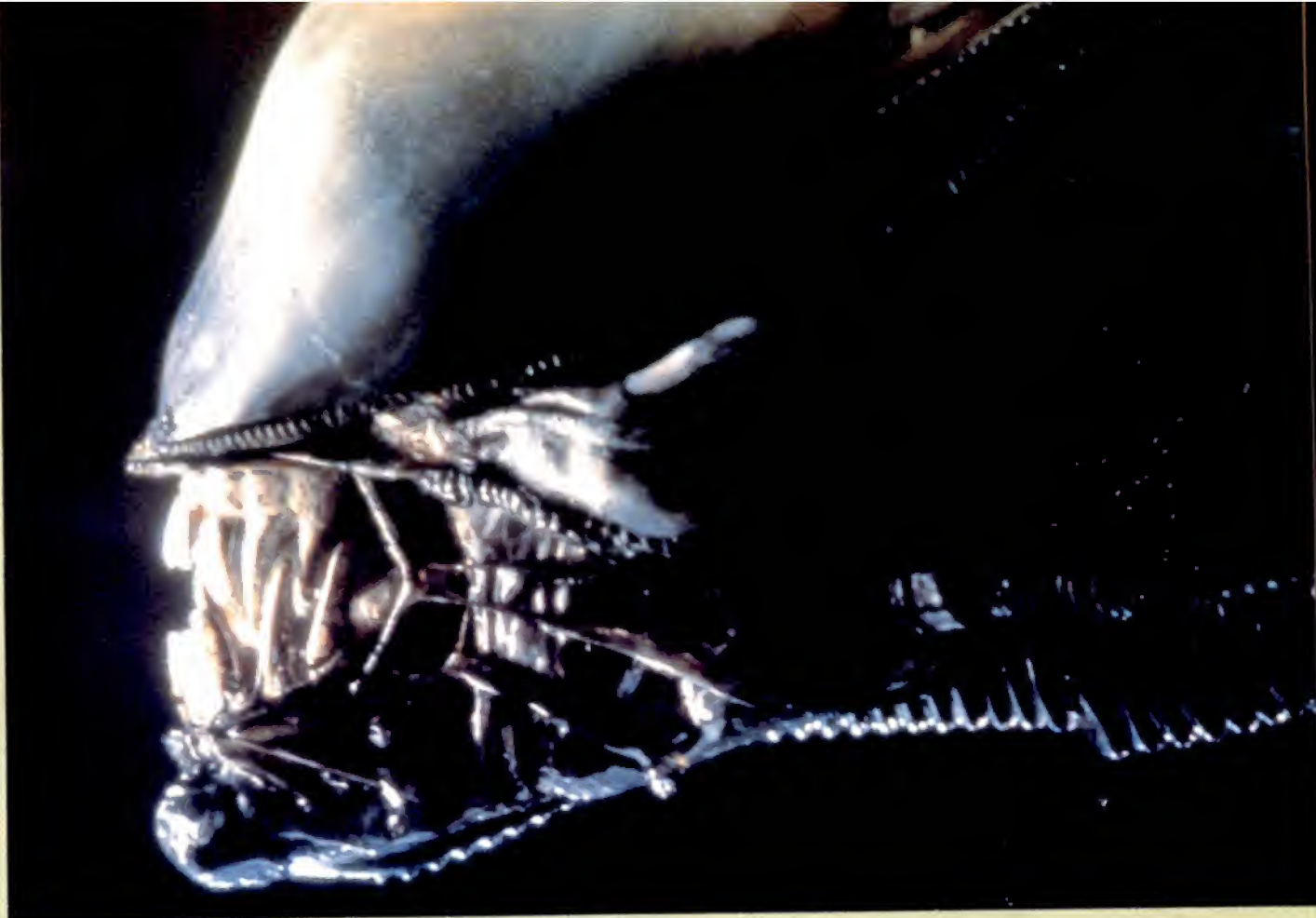
means of fading in or out at any given frame number. This proved invaluable for Gentry when lighting the intricate set. A given light could be faded once the camera passed, since ceilings had to be removed to permit access for the periscope lens.

The entire sequence took over a month to shoot. The first motion-control shot took over a week to build, light, program, shoot, and re-shoot. Because the wide 16mm Nikon lens had to be stopped down to f16 to keep the long trench in focus, the low footcandle light levels required the camera to shoot as slow as 10-second exposures per frame. This meant a 40-second shot consisting of 1200 frames might take as long as seven-hours to shoot when taking into account the shutter closed time. The Kuper has a synthetic shutter option whereby the operator can fool the camera into turning faster when the shutter is closed, thereby increasing motion blur in the open position. The motto on the stage at Praxis Film Works was similar to the one heard on Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Do it right, Do it better, Then do it all over again.

Once a move was completed, a video camera recorded the action onto a Personal Animation Recorder for the PC. This could be played back at real-time to make any changes to the camera move. Once a move

continued on page 61

Above: Giger's Alien and the APC in which you ride as seen in footage used from Fox's ALIENS. Right: You end up inside the egg chamber, faced with the Alien Queen. Below: Rehearsing marines for the ride footage in front of an APC mock-up.





# H. R. GIGER

## ORIGIN OF SPECIES

The design genius of ALIEN on his new foray into extraterrestrial anatomy.

By Les Paul Robley

SPECIES marks the continuing saga of H. R. Giger's battle with a major Hollywood studio over another of his creations. The world-famous Swiss surrealist artist who changed the look of science fiction with ALIEN, for which he won an Oscar in 1979, suffered major indignation at the hands of 20th Century-Fox studios and the director



of ALIEN<sup>3</sup>, David Fincher [see *Imagi-Movies* Vol. 1 No. 3]. On SPECIES, Giger found fault with not only the realization of his designs on the screen, but also with the compensation and credit he received from MGM. The movie arrived at video stores last December after a hit theatrical run at the boxoffice last summer.

Transferring Giger's ideas to movie form has, in the past, frequently left him feeling com-



Above: Giger's Sil design for SPECIES, realized by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc. Left: Giger's design takes shape in polyester, metal, silicone and rubber at Atelier Formart in Switzerland. Right: Giger, ALIEN's design Oscar-winner. Facing Page: A sculpture (187x131.5x32 cm.) designed and fabricated by Giger to honor his behind-the-scenes collaborators (l to r 1-49)—2: producer Frank Mancuso Jr., 4: Boss Films' Richard Edlund, 6: director Roger Donaldson, 11: Sil's Natasha Henstridge, 30: XFX supervisor Steve Johnson, 32: young Sil, Michelle Williams, 33: Giger, 34: assistant Andy Schedler, 40: James Cowan, Giger's U.S. publisher, 47: Leslie Barany, Giger's agent, and 49: screenwriter Dennis Feldman, issued as a signed, limited edition silkscreen.

promised after he sees the finished product on screen. In his own assessment of SPECIES (see page 28) Giger goes to great lengths to criticize the computer effects provided by Boss Film Studio for the film's climax.

SPECIES is the story of a ruthless, genetically engineered female being called Sil, manufactured from an extraterrestrial formula, that has escaped from a lab and is searching for mates with which to procreate its species. The scientists who created it, headed by Ben Kingsley as Fitch, are charged with the formidable task of finding and destroying it, before knowledge of its existence penetrates the wider population.

The movie was produced by Frank Mancuso Jr. and Dennis Feldman, from a screenplay by Feldman. Mancuso is the producer of Paramount's FRIDAY THE 13TH movie sequels, beginning with PART III, as well as Ralph Bakshi's COOL WORLD. Feldman wrote the Eddie Murphy fantasy THE GOLDEN CHILD. The initial genesis for SPECIES evolved from an article Feldman saw in 1987 about the insurmountable odds against an extraterrestrial craft ever locating and visiting Earth.









# GIGER

## SIL'S DESIGN PROTOTYPE

*Giger designed and built a transparent, glowing Sil.*

By Les Paul Robley

Giger conceived Sil in his famous "Biomechanical" style of design that melds flesh with machine. He envisioned this new being as a unique creature—a half-human, half-alien being armed with an array of natural defenses. He imagined her to be far different from the life form in the ALIEN series, possessed of a beauty that went far deeper than the skin.

Said Giger, "I always wanted to have something transparent. Before it was not possible." Ac-

**Giger sketch of Sil's transformation highlighting the glowing concept that was abandoned by the production.**



ording to his agent, Leslie Barany, the idea of transparent beings has always been in Giger's work. But Giger had to fight every step of the way to convince the filmmakers that the idea of a transparent creature had merit. He was initially told that it was going to be too expensive to do, and that the only way to achieve the effect was through computer graphics. Insisting that it was possible, he built a rough model of Sil with his own crew in Zurich and inserted holograms into its cut-away limbs to show how the transparency aspect would enhance the design and could be incorporated.

Out of his own pocket and at a considerable expense, Giger commissioned CFX Creature Effects at Pinewood Studios to cast for him a transparent bust of Sil. Giger had originally hoped he would be able to provide a working model of his creature that the production in L.A. would be able to use. However, his stiff creations sold the producers on the idea of transparency.

"I had a very good relationship with Frank Mancuso Jr. because he called me every night to talk about the movie," Giger remembered. "We made the pre-production here in Switzerland." He employed help from friends Cony De Fries and Andy Schedler, with whom he had worked on the Giger Bar at his birthplace in Chur (pronounced "kooor"). Together, they created the first SPECIES heads and skulls, using a live Swiss model named Nadia as a basis for his designs.

Giger never had the kind of



Giger's early design sculpt of Sil based on model Nadine, draped with a pendant of Sil's tongue, made with shark's teeth. Below: Building Giger's Sil's design prototype with glowing skeleton at Atelier Formart in Switzerland.



working relationship with director Donaldson that he had previously shared with Ridley Scott on ALIEN. In fact, the two rarely spoke. Giger felt from the start a horror specialist would be better. The filmmakers had wanted Giger to fly to Hollywood, but problems with his mother's health prevented him from leaving Zurich. As it happened Melly Giger passed away during the night with Giger at her side.

Similar to the way he worked on ALIEN<sup>3</sup>, Giger faxed many ink drawings of Sil to Hollywood, later supplying some air brush paintings. "I was convinced we could do this thing here in Switzerland," he confessed. "But eventually I realized the people here have not the experience or technology." □



Daniel Rieser works on Giger's transparent prototype at Andy Schedler's Atelier Formart studio.



"I read in a scientific report that the phenomenal distances between stars made traveling here in a spaceship virtually impossible," said Feldman. "So, I hypothesized that contact more likely could be via information. In order for 'them' to find us, however, we had to give out directions. Maybe we shouldn't be so freely broadcasting where we live to life forms that might prey upon us."

Feldman wrote the initial draft of the script on spec. He then submitted it to Mancuso, with whom he was already working on a project called *CAST OF KILLERS*. Later, Australian-born Roger Donaldson stepped in to direct. No stranger to thrillers, yet a horror-genre novice, Donaldson previously helmed the remake of *THE GETAWAY* and *NO WAY OUT*.

"I've always loved science fiction," said Donaldson. "But there was a particular quality to this one that interested me on another level as well. It's also a terrific thriller, with plenty of good scares, lots of tension and unpredictable twists and turns as the story unfolds."

The script underwent eight different drafts, written over a eight-month period, before Donaldson was content that flaws in the story's logic had been corrected. At one point another writer, Larry Gross, tried his hand at perfecting the story, but the script ultimately came back to its originator. Despite some budgetary constraints which completely reshaped Feldman's original bizarre John Carpenteresque ending (a finale that required Sil's face to crawl off her head, slide down her shoulder and mix with an arm), a great deal of his first draft remained in the final shooting script.

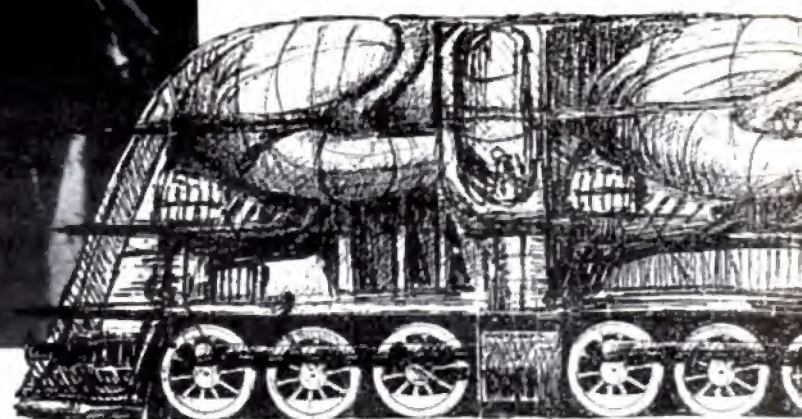
**T**o create *SPECIES*' creature, Mancuso sought out Giger's particular genius. Mancuso was first introduced to the idea of using Giger when Donaldson visited a Southern California comic book shop with his son, and saw *Necronomicon*, a collection of Giger's early works and the same one that had inspired Ridley Scott on *ALIEN*. Donaldson knew at that moment that Giger

## GIGER'S SEXY SHOCKER

**"We wanted Sil to be scary but at the same time have a sensuality," said producer Frank Mancuso Jr. "Giger was the only one who could accomplish this."**



Giger directs a video storyboard of his underutilized *SPECIES* Ghost Train in Zurich. Inset: Giger's skull-like train design.



was the perfect choice to design the female, Sil. Donaldson showed the book to producer Mancuso and MGM president Michael Marcus, who were equally impressed.

Mancuso contacted Giger's California publisher and representative, James Cowan. "I thought this would be a worthwhile project for Giger," said Cowan, "because it allowed him the opportunity to design a very beautiful and special creature, perhaps the most elegant design since the Maria robot in Fritz Lang's *METROPOLIS*." Added Marcus about Giger's involvement: "[We were] equally delighted to have accomplished the enormous coup of securing H. R. Giger. This extraordinary artist has been sought for other projects, but it was the strength of this terrific script that brought him on board for *SPECIES*."

Noted Mancuso, "What I liked about this project was the

opportunity for all of us to be as creative as we wanted to be. It also presented the challenge of walking that fine line between believability and pushing something as far as it can go. After all, there has never been anything quite like Sil on screen before.

"We wanted her to be scary, but at the same time have a sensuality that isn't lost when she appears as the creature. There needed to be a constant level of elegance and grace to her character, and H. R. Giger was the only person we could think of who could accomplish this.

"Roger and I flew to Zurich to meet with him face-to-face. English is not his first language, so we thought his reading the script would not be sufficient. It was like discussing the structure of a building. We outlined her functions and worked closely with him by phone and fax during her creation. He was an extraordinary man to work with, and his design is superb."

From his home in Zurich, Switzerland, Giger recalled his initial contact concerning the film: "I was told this time I could do something I always wanted—to create a monster in another way—an aesthetic warrior, also sensual and deadly, like the women look in my paintings. Usually, they ask me to design monsters with bad-looking, ugly faces and horrible teeth. I wanted Sil to turn into the monster and still look beautiful. This opportunity was, mainly, why I was attracted to the *SPECIES* project."

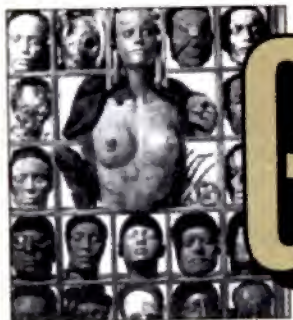
Of course, beautiful to Giger may be a little different from how you or I perceive beauty. Anyone with a knowledge of his incredible *Necronomicon* paintings of women, such as Li and the females in his *Spell* series, would realize this straightaway.

Giger had specific ideas con-

cerning how the creature should change in the film. Sil is first seen in the lab as a young girl, played by Michelle Williams. Later, after breaking free, she quickly matures into the striking five-foot ten-inch model Natasha Henstridge.

Originally, Giger wanted the character to go through four distinct stages of evolution. "She's looking for good-looking, healthy men to breed her race on Earth," he said. "If her lover's not healthy, she sees a green aura around him. When she gets angry she first becomes dark red, then orange-red hot. Her clothes and hair burn off and on her back there are these sharp spikes coming out. Her body weapons are like red glowing steel. Then she cools to transparent carbonized glass and you see her inside bone construction: veins, body organs and discs." It is at this stage when her killing cycle begins and she loses her trans-





# GIGER

## THE MYSTERY OF SAN GOTTARDO

*Animated limbs wreak havoc in Giger's own script for his next movie project.*

*By Les Paul Robley*

The project Giger's most interested in filming is his own story, **THE MYSTERY OF SAN GOTTARDO**, which Giger described as a unique love story. "It is about a man and his love for a freak of nature, Armbeinda, which is really a sentient limb combining an arm and a leg. It is the further development of a recurring image in my work over the last 30 years."

The concept stems from a 1963 creation called "The Beggar," Giger's very first sketch, featuring a leg and an arm holding a hat. Giger has filled several sketchbooks with the stories of these "reduced" beings.

The story concerns a race of biomechanoids created by a military organization. The premise: your arms and legs are slaves that do your bidding, but what if they have a mind of their own and were set free? Ink drawings depict the disembodied parts attacking their creator (Giger's self-portrait) in the San Gottardo border tunnel which links Switzerland and Italy. To insure that his vision remains intact, Giger hopes to retain creative control as a producer on the film...and not be forced to rely on CGI. □

Giger's disembodied "reduced" beings attack their creator, bathing in the San Gottardo border tunnel which links Switzerland and Italy. Far left: Armbeinda, the freak of nature at the heart of a unique love story, penned by Giger. Left: The bizarre biomechanoids, created by the military, fight back. Design sketches by H. R. Giger for a long-in-development pet movie project.

parency.

"But then they cut out the color changes and the glowing aspects," he lamented. "They didn't like someone else making suggestions, saying how the script should go. I gave many ideas...In the beginning, I was not happy because I saw my suggestions were not welcome. I think the director always wanted to make her ugly and I wanted to keep her beautiful. I think he's a great action director, but for the horror scenes, he and I did not share the same vision."

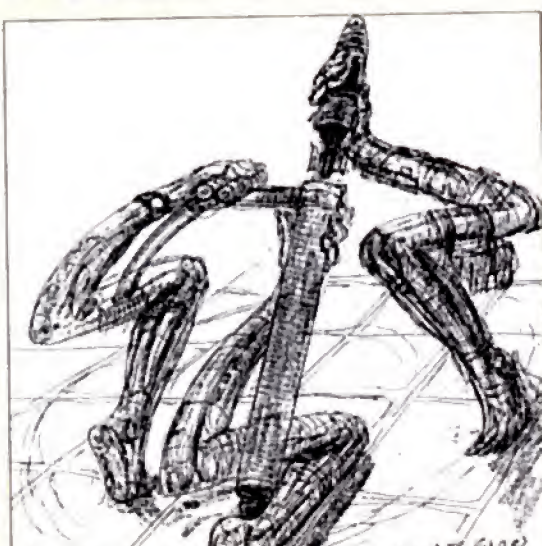
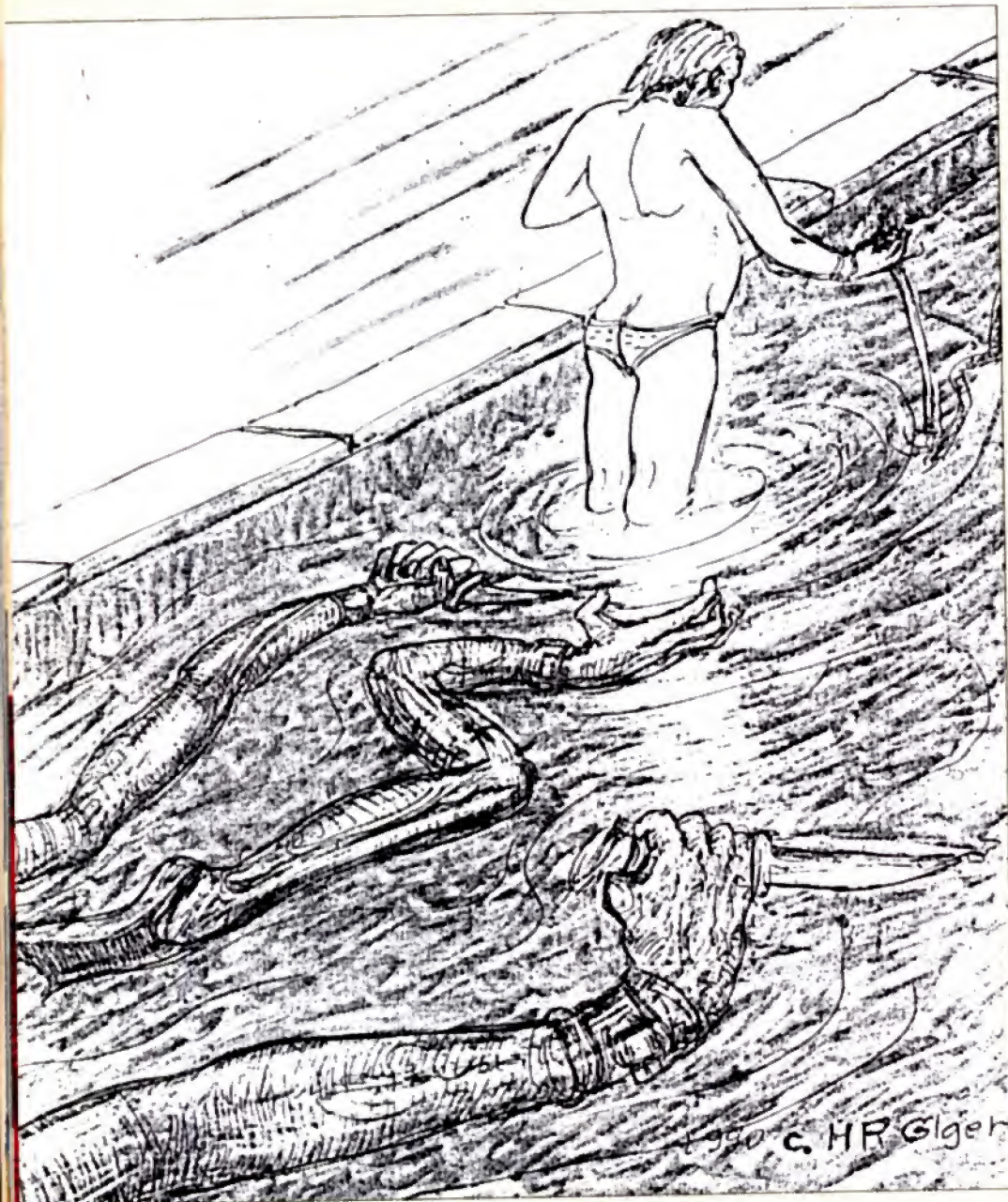
According to Giger, the producers finally embraced his concept to design Sil with a transparent skin (see sidebar page 18) when they realized they could show Sil being pregnant with another creature growing inside her. But Hollywood has a problem showing a



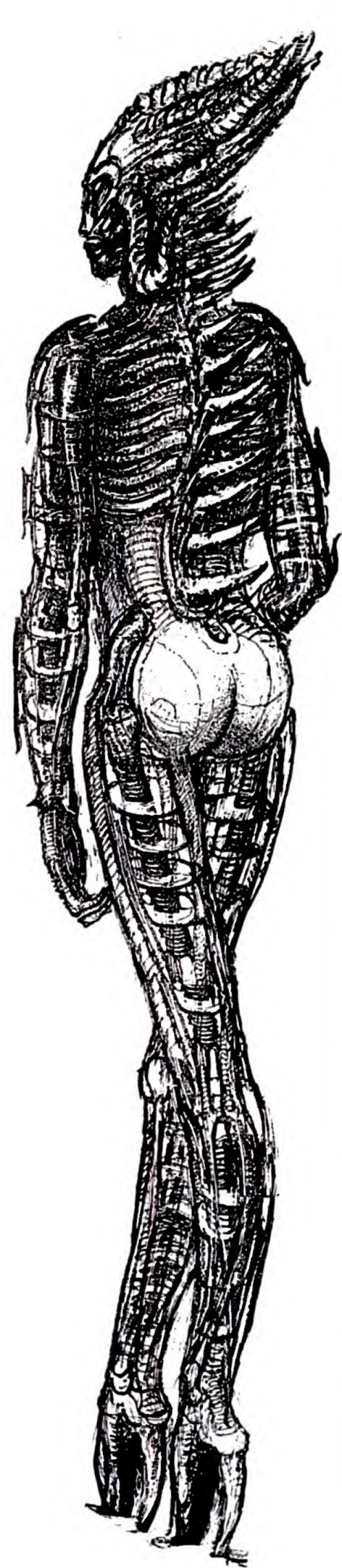
Giger, with agent Leslie Barany (l) and collaborator Andy Schedler (r) at the Swiss Atelier Formart Studio.

pregnant woman and her offspring—however alien—being wasted on screen. She must have her baby first, and it must grow to a substantial size before the ratings board will let you kill her. Giger felt that if they made the lady and her baby look like red-hot steel, the creatures would look significantly alien enough to where this wouldn't pose a problem. "But they said we can't make her glowing," added Giger. "They never did tell me why."

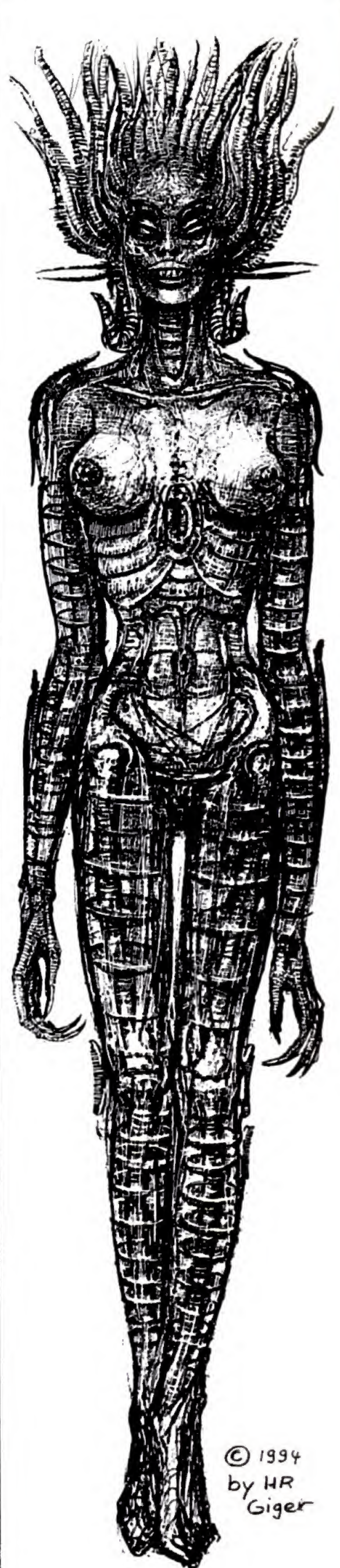
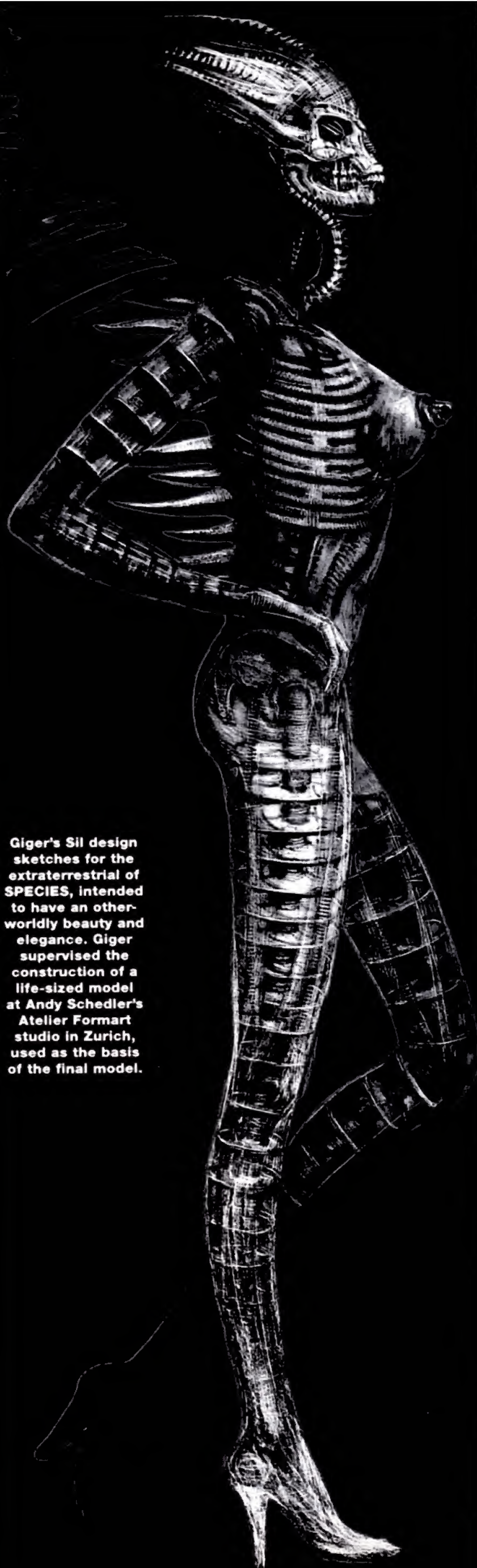
Giger also wanted to incorporate an unused idea from **ALIEN** whereby the creature's tongue would be composed of barbed hooks. Sil would kiss her lovers, forcing her tongue into the victim's mouth and down their throats, then yank the insides out. To help Giger conceptualize this unusual







Giger's Sil design sketches for the extraterrestrial of SPECIES, intended to have an otherworldly beauty and elegance. Giger supervised the construction of a life-sized model at Andy Schedler's Atelier Formart studio in Zurich, used as the basis of the final model.

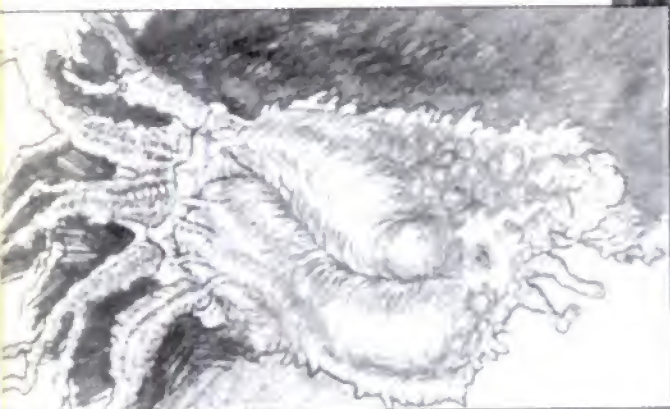


© 1994  
by HR  
Giger



tongue idea, agent Leslie Barany sent him a set of shark jaws from New York, to which Giger acknowledged: "Leslie is more than an agent, he is my close friend and also happens to be a good art director. The razor-sharp shark teeth were a big help. I transformed them into Sil's dangerous, one-way tongue."

Unfortunately, Sil's Deadly Kiss was rejected in favor of the old ALIEN standby, an object bursting through bone. The Chestbuster from ALIEN has become the American icon of rebirth in horror films, and is now used far too much to suit its original creator. In SPECIES it has become the "Chest-



Natasha Henstridge as Sil emerges full grown from her chrysalis on the train. Inset: Chrysalis design by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc. Giger objected to the notion of a cocoon as too similar to ALIEN.

## CLONING GIGER'S ALIEN

**"Why must SPECIES be made so much in a repeat way?" asked Giger. "We must have better ideas and should not be known as the rip-off people of other films."**

birther," Giger joked, made clean by MGM so that the Pope might not find it objectionable.

Giger also objected to the script's idea of using flame throwers to kill the beast. "I was against the use of fire during the climax because that's an old-fashioned Middle-Age weapon, like the way they used to burn witches," said Giger. "When they asked me how to kill Sil, I said the best way was to blow off her head. Nobody can live without a head." Even George Romero's zombies proved that.

**T**hroughout the production, Giger expressed much concern over the way SPECIES seemed to copy the elements of previous films, namely ALIENS I, II and III. He sent numerous faxes to Mancuso and Donaldson, even submitting his own version of how he felt the film should end. Giger scripted an all-out war between Sil and the military, filled with helicopters and explosions, climaxing in a drive-in theater showing 20th Century-Fox's ALIEN. Laura, the molecular biologist-turned-commando (played by Marg

Helgenberger) blows off Sil's head with a rocket launcher. As her body hits the ground, her glowing baby slips out through an opening in her chest and rolls under one of the patron's cars watching the show. The car heats up and explodes, causing the baby's end.

Another version (with which the MPAA would've had a field day) involved one of the soldiers picking up the baby by the legs and bashing it against a wall, until all he holds is the baby legs in his hands. This would occur as a surprise ending, following the main end credits.

All along, Giger had been assured that the finished film would not follow other films too closely. He strongly felt that Hollywood horror always seemed to share some final confrontation with fire. He believed a fiery end in a burning oil pool echoed the finales of ALIEN<sup>3</sup> and TERMINATOR 2. Giger noted that Sil should be resistant to fire, and even went so far as to fax a humorous drawing of a man with a flame thrower between his legs, standing over a kneeling woman crouched dog-style and bathed in the flames.

He titled his design the Flame Thrower F\*\*ker, and it is rumored the production even made a T-shirt out of it.

In a visionary fax sent to producer Mancuso in August of '94, Giger insisted that any bad press the film received would be a result of the derivative elements used in the final version. Giger outlined five elements which he claimed "borrowed" from ALIENS 1 through 3: the Chestbuster, the punching tongue, the cocoon, the use of flame throwers, and finally, Giger himself.

Argued Giger, "Why must this film be made so much in a repeat way? I think we must have better ideas and we should not be known as the rip-off people of other films. Not only this, but a bad light is shed upon me for being so redundant. You assured me that we would have a film without having to copy other highlights so closely. The tongue looks too much like a carrot. This tongue is not for pulling out, but is to punch through his head just like the design I made for ALIEN.

"You can say whatever you want about me. That I'm a bad

designer, that I'm late and don't understand the ways of Hollywood. The one thing I can feel, however, is when the film comes too close to ALIEN I, II & III, that is very bad for all of us. I don't work with you for only money. I work hard to make SPECIES the most special it can be."

Added Barany, Giger's agent, "The film's lack of originality is not because Giger has chosen to imitate himself. It should be clear that he has tried to surpass himself, and in many ways he has succeeded. Too bad it is not all on the screen. It should be clear from his writings that he recognized every scene and effect which bore similarity to his early works, immediately, and tried very hard to convince MGM to listen to his new ideas.

"Giger worked harder and longer on SPECIES than any film before. He even got involved in script change suggestions which would have added true horror and human depth to the story. He even wrote an entirely new dream sequence which could have been a major highlight of the film. Another first, he built a fully operational train with terrorizing effects built into it, plus a claustrophobic train station designed specifically for the action to take place upon. He storyboarded the action with specific camera movements leaving only the need for some relatively simple and inexpensive blue-screen shots, proving that CGI is not the only way to go. Reasons given for leaving it out ranged from it doesn't advance the story, no budget to do it, even though, at one point, it was incorporated into subsequent scripts and also storyboarded by MGM." (For more on Giger's unrealized Ghost Train, see page 39.)

Perhaps Giger's biggest dissatisfaction with SPECIES lies in the CGI work by Boss Film, which the artist felt failed to do justice to his concept of Sil. Noted Giger, Boss Film's "computer-controlled frog-like ugliness...had nothing to do with my concept" (see page 28 for Giger's own full post-mortem on the film).

Richard Edlund, supervisor

continued on page 27





## BUILDING GIGER'S ALIEN

*Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc. built Sil to Giger's specs.*

By Les Paul Robley

Despite the innovation of Boss Film's motion capture work (see page 32), there were sequences in *SPECIES* that required a physical model of Sil. Steve Johnson, founder of XFX, Inc., was brought onto the project to realize the life-size images of the alien. Having previously worked with Giger's designs at Boss Film on *POLTERGEIST II*, Johnson was familiar with the artist's style.

"It was great to work with Richard Edlund again; he was the real reason I got this job," Johnson admitted. "They had written off so much of the beginning of this as a digitally created character, and I'm not sure they had really done this for a feature before. I think the reason Richard wanted me to do the job so badly was because we had a good working relationship together when I was head of the Creature Shop at Boss on *BIG*

*TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA* and *PREDATOR*. There was an entire X-factor eliminated at the beginning.

"What was brilliant about this film was, from the beginning, [producer] Frank [Mancuso], [director] Roger [Donaldson], Richard and everyone all sat down and had very long brainstorming sessions, trying to figure out exactly how to best approach this stuff. So my input was taken very seriously. I was involved in the lab creature sequence almost in writing the thing."

Johnson never worked with writer Dennis Feldman at this stage of the production. "Dennis was definitely involved and his ideas were listened to," continued Johnson, "but the brainstorming as far as what our technology would allow wasn't in the script at that point. Whenever you have a writer write a script who is not a special effects expert, they're not sure what's possible to do."

XFX supervisor Steve Johnson with the puppet Sil, only briefly glimpsed in the film. Johnson sought Giger's design input long distance via fax and phone.



XFX's animatronic Sil puppet on the sewer set for the film's climax.

Johnson looked forward to realizing Giger's designs. His main challenge on the project was to please the highly critical artist. He and his crew tried to "think like Giger," remaining true to his work, and constantly referenced his books throughout their immense effects ordeal.

"Giger's designs are fluid, marked with raw motion on the canvas, and they are incredibly erotic," Johnson pointed out. "When you're asked to bring one of his creations to three dimensions, it's a difficult thing to achieve, because you have to take a loose, fluid approach to it. I think one reason the entire process turned out as well as it did is that we stayed in very tight communication with him

through faxing, phone calls and Fed Ex. We kept him very much in the loop and always listened to what he had to say."

The most unique and challenging characteristic of the creature to capture on film was that its body is translucent, as opposed to transparent. "Our creature has a complex skin process that allows light to penetrate, as well as play across the body structure," said Johnson. "It is a unique and horrifying being, yet a thing of beauty as well. One of the coolest elements of the creature was that it's translucent and you see through it, so it couldn't be done in the normal way. One thing that helped us out a lot was all the materials research



we'd done for *THE ABYSS* previously for the floating aliens at the end."

Early on, Johnson had decided that he wasn't really thrilled with the way puppets were normally built. "You do a sculpture, a mold, a mask, then a paint job," he said. "I feel it doesn't always move naturally or organically, or doesn't wrinkle upon itself naturally. I wanted to make something a lot more organic than that for this film. It was my major goal to do that and make Giger happy."

To realize Sil, the ruthless, genetically engineered female creature manufactured from an outer space formula, XFX made several full-body animatronics with replaceable arms, heads and torsos which could clip on and off. The interlocking mechanics were designed by Eric Fiedler. At first, Giger was not very happy with the face, saying it was too "ape-like." Johnson took Giger's suggestion and made it the way the artist and designer wanted. "You're talking about a creative change of about a 1/4-inch, and the untrained eye wouldn't even be able to notice it," explained Johnson. "Not a big deal—we just added a clear dome over her forehead."

Johnson and sculptor Mike Hosch work on realizing Giger's designs in clay on a life cast of Dana Hee.



## REALIZING GIGER'S VISION

**"Giger's designs are fluid, marked with raw motion on the canvas, and incredibly erotic," said Sil puppet supervisor Steve Johnson. "We tried to think like Giger."**



At XFX, Steve Johnson (l) supervises fitting Dana Hee in the Sil body suit.

Sil's head was made up of two layers—a Giger skull with a lovely face on top. Bands of texture were placed beneath the exterior skin so that shapes moved underneath like muscles to create expressions. Giger was extremely pleased with the final result. He sent Johnson a fax claiming that the animatronic of Sil was the best 3-dimensional realization of a female Giger creature. Johnson proudly displays the fax on his office wall.

Sil was put on the screen in four different ways: full-body animatronics, Boss Films' CGI, a combination of the two, and a woman in a suit. The Sil suit was worn by kick-boxing Olympic Gold Medalist Dana Hee for brief shots of the creature jumping into the water and bursting from her hotel suite.

For the nightmare flashes, Johnson also used a man in the suit, filmed in 35mm underwater. They reversed the film in post to give it an eerie, otherworldly quality, with strobe lights flashing behind and in front. "I wanted to really break up the human form, [similar to] what Giger did with the Alien using tubes running off the back

and length of the head, so you didn't quite know what you were looking at and it didn't look so much like a man-in-a-suit."

Johnson added three 12-foot phallic tubes growing off the back of the head, as well as a series of eight 12-foot crab claws on its back. "In the water they moved beautifully and really served to great purpose in breaking up the human form, because there are tentacles and things flying all over the place," Johnson said. "It looks like a Giger painting come to life and when Giger got the 20-minute [footage I sent] he said he could

watch a whole movie of it." Unfortunately, MGM saw fit to use only a few seconds of it in the film, which makes it difficult to see what's going on.

Johnson claimed he and his shop were given only 13 weeks to create the actual film puppet of Sil. The very first shot she appeared in was made doubly difficult because she had to work in a jacuzzi filled with water. "Anytime a puppet works in water it's always very difficult because it's harder to move in, and what you build has to work mechanically and cosmetically in water," said Johnson.

Johnson's most complicated sequence, however, was in the lab when the creature is reproduced in its "pure" state. "We used over 20 different puppets to create a two-minute sequence. It was one shot after another, with each shot requiring a separate strategy: gravity tricks, different puppets, opticals... We were very excited about it—and very nervous.

"We took a real lateral approach to the cocoon and several of the lab creature effects. We show this organism grow from a single cell throughout twenty different effects all the way into a 10-foot chrysalis. Chrysalis supervisor Bill Bryan and I came up with a way to actually create creatures without using rubber molds. A real organic, lateral approach to actually creating animatronics... What it basically involved was forming layers of polyurethane plastic that we then manipulated with pneumatics by applying negative and positive air pressure. We then painted them with colored gels, overlapping them. So we ended up with something

At XFX Gino Acevado (l) and Norman Cabrera paint the animatronic Sil.







The finished Sil sculpt (l) and the final animatronic puppet (r), Giger's designs brought to life by XFX craftsmen. Right: The transparent Sil head prior to painting and final detailing, showing the interior mechanics of the puppet.

that moved much more organically than a foam rubber piece ever could. Like muscles moving underneath, skin sliding on top of that and wrinkling where it naturally would—I'm very pleased with that. It's probably one of the most innovative things we did in the film."

But it wasn't just Sil and aliens that XFX provided. Johnson's team of 40-plus effects artisans created the illusion of reality for many other shots in *SPECIES*. For the scene where Michelle Williams breaks through her glass cage, the crew made a life-casting of her arm in a fist and built a duplication of it over a hydraulic ram. The mechanical "fist" literally smashed through a 2-1/2-inch piece of real glass. The little throwaway effect would never look as real if it had been break-away glass. It really sells the shot,

making it more powerful.

Later, when Williams hides on the train and gorges herself on chocolate bars, Johnson fashioned her with fat makeup. Her skin writhes as in *ALTERED STATES*, as if worms are moving beneath the flesh. Then worm-like objects begin oozing out of her face.

"I'm pleased with that and think it's really magic," Johnson said. "First of all, it's done very simple, but in a way that no one will be able to figure out. It's a combination of two very distinctly different techniques—one being makeup effects and the other CGI. She has appliances on her face and underneath those are little buttons and we attached mono-filament to those buttons, and just out of frame, pulled the wire. The computer department took care of removing the wires.

And there's really no other way you can get that direct kind of movement.

"Then we went to another method and had the worms actually break through the skin using the same technique which had pre-scored skin on top of the buttons, so it would look like a worm beginning to grow out. Once that had gone three or four inches, then the CGI took off." A definite advantage over *ALTERED STATES*.

Johnson told a funny story about why the worms growing out of Williams' face were so fat. It wasn't from the chocolate bars in the plot. Giger had told him by phone that they should resemble "pickles" growing out of her face. But, in Giger-ese, "pickles" was meant to say "pimples" and so Williams ended up instead with kosher dills



coming out of her skin.

When the older Sil (played by Natasha Henstridge) falls out of her cocoon in the bathroom, the crew filmed it upside-down so that Sil would appear to defy gravity. Sil simply stands up through a hole cut in the set and works her way out of the chrysalis. She reaches her arms straight up out of frame, grabbing a trapeze bar. The pulley yanks her up and out of frame,





This is spinal tap: Filming Lisa Liberati as the Bathroom Bimbo who gets removed from the competition by Sil, scouting for a human mating partner. Right: XFX makeup artist Kenny Myers (l) and Bill Corso apply the design.

so that it appears she's falling down. It sounded like some of Johnson's early PREDATOR ideas were finally being put to good use, such as shooting in reverse and upside-down.

For the grisly cutting of Sil's thumb, XFX physically cut off a rubber thumb. Then Boss Films grew it back with CGI. For the birthing scene, they constructed a special puppet that would allow its chest to split open and have a mechanical baby within a cocoon. Once the baby started to grow, CGI again took over. The production would not allow the baby to come out from between her legs. So, the wicked Giger submitted a humorous fax showing the art of new species insemination.

XFX technicians Eric Feldler (l) and Bob Newton construct the transparent animatronic Sil puppet.



The rat featured in the twist ending was built oversized at about two-feet in length. Shot in reverse, the puppeteers yanked the tongue in. When viewed correctly, the tongue appeared to shoot out. Another rat built real-size was pinned to a false rod on a quick release. They filmed the scene by jamming a fake tongue into it, stabbing it in a pre-scored area, then released the pin at the same moment so that the victim rat whipped right out of frame. "It took about a million tries to actually get it in the right area," Johnson laughed. The tongue sequence with the child eating the rat was entirely computer-generated at Boss.

Even a form of CGI is slowly working its way into Johnson's studio. "Adobe Photoshop is really a good tool for design, plus programs particularly made for character, like Metaphor," Johnson admitted. "What's really neat about it is you can spend a day on the computer and print-out a photograph of a makeup that is so photo-realistic, it looks like you did the makeup and put it into any environment. It's a brilliant tool to show to clients."

Some of Johnson's best ideas failed to make it into the film. "We planned on quite a few things for the lab sequence that didn't end up being shot," he said. "It involved other versions of the creature that we built with our new technology out of this polyurethane fabrication. The



only thing not in the film that I'm unhappy about is the animatronics aren't in it as much as I would like them to be. However, on the other hand, Roger Donaldson is a very strong director and he directed the movie he wanted to make and you can't argue with that. If he had wanted to see the creature more then I'm sure she would be there."

Was Johnson unhappy about not getting poster credit like Giger and Edlund after all his efforts? And does he share the same feelings as Giger over how little his creation appears in the film? The effects artist was disappointed about the lack of poster credit, but, Johnson's young and will eventually be on billboards alongside Stan Winston and Rick Baker. XFX followed their stint on SPECIES by working on special effects for EVOLVER, Jim Jarmusch's DEAD MAN, THE MUNSTERS and STUPIDS for John Landis, BAD PINOCCHIO, more Duracell commercials and THE MUPPETS for Universal.

As for Giger's disappoint-

ment, "I had one phone call with him after he saw the film where I commiserated with him," said Johnson. "I feel badly for him that he didn't get his image necessarily shown a lot. And for the first time it was one he really liked, so he would've been very happy to have it seen. It's probably more of a disappointment for him than me because I understand the Hollywood process a little better. The reason I have no bad feelings is it was just such a wonderful, positive experience. I know that we were all on the same team and made the movie that was ultimately their choice to make. But I really can't complain because as much as Giger's unhappy, I think he's unhappy because he's not as directly involved in the film and doesn't quite understand as well that it's a group effort all the time.

"It's not really fair to criticize after the fact until we're out there producing and directing our own film. I don't think we're ever going to get our artistic images exactly the way we want them." □



## GIGER'S LEGAL NIGHTMARE

**“When the contracts first come it’s always an unnecessarily long time and a lot of tricks,” said Giger. “And I’m not used to people wanting to cheat me.”**

of the Boss Film computer effects responded to Giger’s criticisms. “When the movie came out, he [Giger] was so happy,” said Edlund. “He was full of accolades. Two months later he changes his mind, and he does this historically. He did it on *POLTERGEIST 2* and on *ALIEN<sup>3</sup>*. He always hates his work when other people do it because he doesn’t do it. As long as he’s the sculptor and he puts his finishing touches on the thing, he’s happy. It’s sad that he does this, because a lot of people worked incredibly hard on this film. But it’s not uncharacteristic of him to rain dislike on people who attempt to interpret his work on the screen, as with Ridley Scott and David Fincher. It’s the artist’s need for control over his baby, I think.”

Countered Leslie Barany, Giger’s agent, “Edlund here tars with too broad a brush. Giger loved Steve Johnson’s rendition of Sil in *SPECIES*. Giger is a generous collaborator who has often praised the work of others, especially Ridley Scott. But what is at issue here is the animation of Sil by Boss Films, and that is another matter.” (For Giger’s response, see Letters, page 62.)

**N**oted Giger of his relationship with *SPECIES* producers, “When the contracts first come it’s always an unnecessarily long time and a lot of tricks, and I’m not used to people wanting to cheat me. The legal part was more horrible this time than on *ALIEN<sup>3</sup>*. It seems to be the normal thing in Hollywood. But in the end, it’s the result that you see which is important and not how much it cost. It has to look good. If it looks bad, I would be ashamed. I want it to be a good movie because I’ve already worked on two that weren’t terrific films: *POLTERGEIST 2* and *ALIEN<sup>3</sup>*.”

Giger’s future contracts will now opt for gross percentage points and stipulate that no work shall begin until the final agreements are signed. It will also be insisted that the copyright for all concepts and designs *not* incorporated into the final cut of the film shall remain with Giger. Given his experience, would Giger ever consid-



Natasha Henstridge as Sil seeks to perpetuate the *SPECIES* with Whip Hubley. Inset: Giger’s rejected story idea for Hubley’s death scene.

er working on another sequel if the opportunity presented itself?

After seeing a final cut of *SPECIES* last June, Giger was none too thrilled by what he saw. He loved the makeup effects supplied by Steve Johnson’s XFX company. Giger faxed Johnson a compliment that the latter has framed on the wall, saying that the animatronic model of Sil was the best 3-dimensional realization of a female Giger creature come to life as they appear in his paintings. He even went so far as to commission the young makeup artist to build him a second Sil, exactly like it, but stiff. Giger told Johnson that if he is called again to work on a similar film, he wants him to fabricate the monster.

Giger also fought very hard to get dream sequences involving Johnson’s Sil mating with a fellow creature extended, as well as his own train segment. Giger loved the first nightmare showing the creatures making love underwater. Johnson had sent him a 20-minute tape for his approval, so he had no way of knowing it would be so abbreviated in the finished film. He thought the editors may be

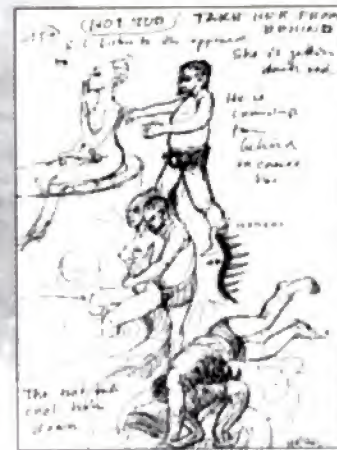
so familiar with their cut of *SPECIES* that their sense of time may have been distorted. They trim it down until someone watching in the theater is shown only a three-second shot, and it is sometimes not long enough for a viewer to assimilate the information. However, the filmmakers have this footage imbedded indelibly in their brain and may not be aware it’s too brief. He felt the same about the birthing scene and others where Johnson’s puppet was utilized. Giger felt confused by the introduction of the baby creature, believing it killed the focus of the movie. Giger never wanted the son in the script in the first place, refusing even to design it.

As for Boss Films’ computer effects, it was Giger’s feeling from the start that CGI was hardly needed in the film. He thought it could’ve been done with a combination of makeup effects and someone in a rubber suit, much like the first *ALIEN*. Now that the technique is available, people are too quick to want to use it in situations where it’s unnecessary, Giger believes.

The only digital effect Giger

liked was Sil’s second eye transformation. But he never understood why a creature with this kind of duality was never shown as a full-body morph, especially when the effect is readily available and fitting to the story. Perhaps it is to the director’s credit that full body shots were limited in length to what appears in the finished film, since many of Giger’s earlier criticisms seem to agree with other *SPECIES* reviews.

Giger sent a letter to Mancuso stating that the film could be much better if they just gave it a little more time. He suggested a radical solution of delaying the



opening for two months and re-doing all of the computer effects at the end. “Sometimes I ask myself why I talk to you all night long on the phone without seeing any of my good advice in the film,” Giger sadly concluded.

Giger also disliked the style-A poster used in the *SPECIES* ad campaign. He noted it looks like the *ALIEN* poster with Sil curled up inside the egg. About it he wrote: “What really hurts me, is to be mistaken in the way the audience must think, that Giger is responsible for the movie poster design made with photo and air brush!” Whoever did it went to great pains to simulate the artist’s biomechanical style.

Barany even suggested MGM wanted Giger’s name as much as his designs, for they referred to the creature as H. R. Giger’s in some of their telephone campaigns. After dialing the 1-800-5-SPECIES telephone number, callers listen to the coming attractions trailer. Then they hear: “Academy Award-winning artist H. R. Giger gave movie fans nightmares with his creation in the *ALIEN* films. Now he’s created

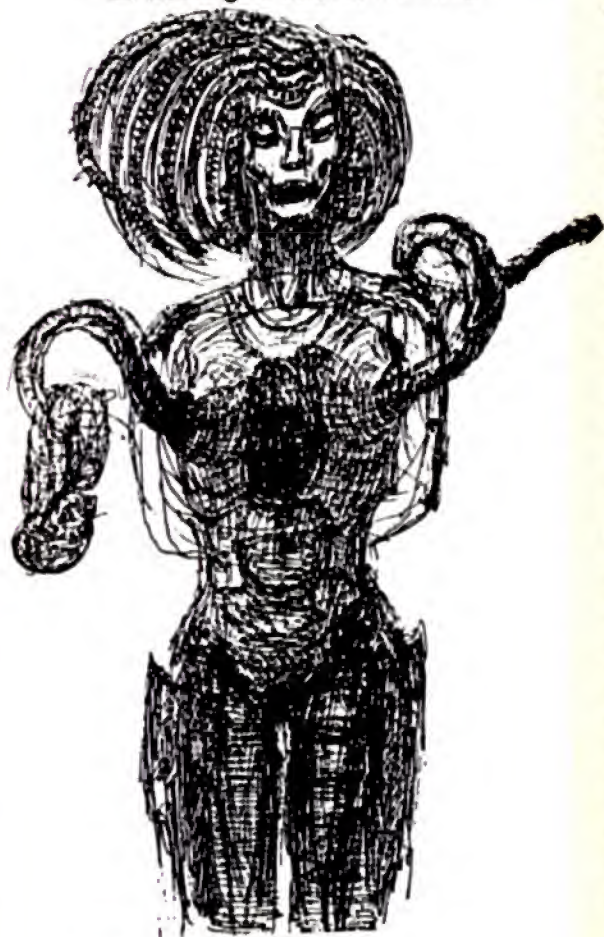


Sil, the half-human, half-alien creature at the center of the sci-fi suspense thriller from MGM, SPECIES." No other names are mentioned. Not Donaldson.

Giger's negotiations with MGM for proper credit and compensation for his work continued until the month of the film's theatrical release last July. To finally receive his "reduced" fee of \$50,000 for designing and building the film's Ghost Train (the artist claims to have spent \$100,000 of his own money building the train), Giger gave in to two points for which he and his agent initially fought with great zeal. Originally, Giger wanted main title credit for the concept, the design and the fabrication of the train, and the credit by name of all the companies who helped him put it together in Zurich. He finally settled for an end title credit on the train, and for the inclusion of only the names of individuals—not the companies—of the people involved. The reference made these professionals seem like mere assistants to H. R. Giger, causing the artist difficulties in his relationships with his collaborators.

"Why would MGM do this when they credit every catering company?" asked Giger's agent Les Barany. "Perhaps to obscure the fact that there were other companies besides Boss

**SPECIES biology a la Giger: The artist's unused designs showing how Sil would give birth to her baby.**



# GIGER

## THE DESIGNER'S MOVIE POST-MORTEM

*Giger disowns the CGI rendition of his Sil design concept as "unaesthetic."*

By H. R. Giger

Translated by Sandra Hathaway

I realized many things after seeing SPECIES. For example: I was hired because of my name, which seems to be closely linked to ALIEN—even if they say things to the contrary. Working closely with producer Frank Mancuso Jr., we were in agreement on the design of Sil. She was to remain aesthetically beautiful and elegant, even after her transformation into a lethal creature. Transparent, with a rather massive skeleton, the shape of her body accentuated by saucer-shaped plates around the joints. Filmed suspensefully, she would produce a sense of horror.

Visual effects supervisor Richard Edlund once called the mechanized puppet of Sil, built by makeup effects expert Steve Johnson, a "transparent pin-up girl." Thus, two completely different Sils appeared in the movie. There was the—for me, aesthetically convincing—transparent puppet built by Johnson and the other, absolutely not transparent, teeth-gnashing, unaesthetic computer-Sil, which has nothing to do with my ideas. Unfortunately, this computer-controlled, frog-like ugliness appears in the last ten minutes of the film and I can only hope that viewers will not consider it synonymous with my work. I want to distance myself from this Sil, which has nothing to do with my concept. I assume there was not enough time or enough means to



Giger with his mother Melly, who passed away during his assignment on SPECIES.

present Sil in a way that retained her transparency and beauty.

The scene I especially like is the birth of Sil's son. Here Steve Johnson's Sil, the beautiful monster, was used. She had class! Sil's grown-up son, however, is an aberration from the original script and is unnecessary and confusing. It seems there was a lack of confidence that one monster, just my Sil, would be enough.

Since I couldn't travel to the States, I didn't want to leave Sil to just *anybody*, so I produced my sketches in such a way that they conveyed an impression of Sil, but would never have enough detail to construct her from. I wanted to make the model myself, as I had the Alien in Ridley Scott's movie. The pre-production model started in Andy Schedler's studio in Switzerland wasn't bad. But the work morale was counterproductive from the beginning. We had no specialist and too little

know-how. There is no film industry in Switzerland.

I asked producer Frank Mancuso Jr. several times to send us someone like Steve Johnson. We were made to feel guilty during an attack-like visit from Mancuso, Donaldson, production designer John Muto and screenwriter Dennis Feldmann, who wanted to move the production of Sil to Hollywood. Even though we hadn't even started production, we were collectively ashamed and left Sil to the Americans.

Now I had to make up 1:1 plans of Sil (which would not have been necessary if she had been produced in Switzerland) almost overnight, using an airbrush, which I hadn't done in years. What was presented to me—in half size—was a clay model with a fish face, which even MGM didn't seem to like. The second clay model, made by Steve Johnson in actual size, was better, although the upper body was too big and the head with its low forehead looked a bit ape-like. I corrected the figure's appearance, using faxes and phone, so that she would remain beautiful even after her transformation. We managed this, even though Donaldson always wanted to make Sil more fierce-looking and more fearsome.

Steve Johnson was stuck between two camps. Since he was starting with the skeleton and skull, which had nothing to do with a beauty, Donaldson let him be. Then he built the sur-



## MISUSED MONSTER-MAKER

**“I realized after seeing SPECIES that I was hired for my name, which seems to be closely linked to ALIEN,” said Giger, “even if they say things to the contrary.”**

face of the skin around them, using PVC, just as we had done during pre-production. The difference was that he had put in joints, while we had made a stiff puppet, since Mancuso always said our puppet would later be digitized and animated using CGI. But to finally bring Sil to life, apparently a moveable puppet was needed. Thus, in the scenes where Sil is seen briefly, we see Johnson’s “computer-free” puppet. The huge difference between the “animatronic Sil” and the “computer Sil” cannot be overlooked in this case.

Had we sent the rigid puppet we had manufactured in Switzerland to Hollywood, it would have become a total computer product—a true horror figure. Seen from that point of view, Steve Johnson saved my Sil. Had she appeared more often in the film, in all probability, this text would not have been necessary. Since there was not a final version of Sil until the movie was finished, only then could Johnson’s Sil be compared to the computer Sil, and show up the discrepancies.

After the Ghost Train was taken to LA and filmed according to the vision of director Roger Donaldson and producer Frank Mancuso Jr. it was no longer my nightmare sequence for Sil. The whole scene is about eight seconds long. Sil runs in front of the locomotive, which quickly catches up with her. She wakes up bathed in sweat. Edlund did the scene in high Hollywood style, and it is, in its own way, successful. I want to thank Mancuso and Edlund for that scene. They did a great job with it. At least, my Ghost Train was preserved in the film in some way.

The reason the movie still did so well has to do with Donaldson’s fast-paced direction, the heavy promotion utilizing my name, and the two real Sils, Natasha Henstridge and the

child actress, Michelle Williams.

A scene I didn’t like was the beginning of the cocoon scene, which I described in detail. The worms were supposed to screw out from bursting pimples in Sil’s skin. Instead, as it was done in the film, the skin breaks and red-brown computer sausages pull out (but very, very quickly to hide the computerized embarrassment).

The scene of Sil’s birth, however, compensates for that. There was a prototype for that scene: the Spanish theater group “La Fura dels Baus” has naked women tumbling head over heels out of rubber tubes. I liked the blue “shrimp soup” Sil is always dreaming about, which is skillfully repeated throughout the film. These dream sequences show two E.T.’s attempting chest-to-back copulation. They were created by Johnson, and filmed by Donaldson in Edlund’s tank in the Boss Film studios. Another effect particularly well done was the transformation of Sil’s eye. □

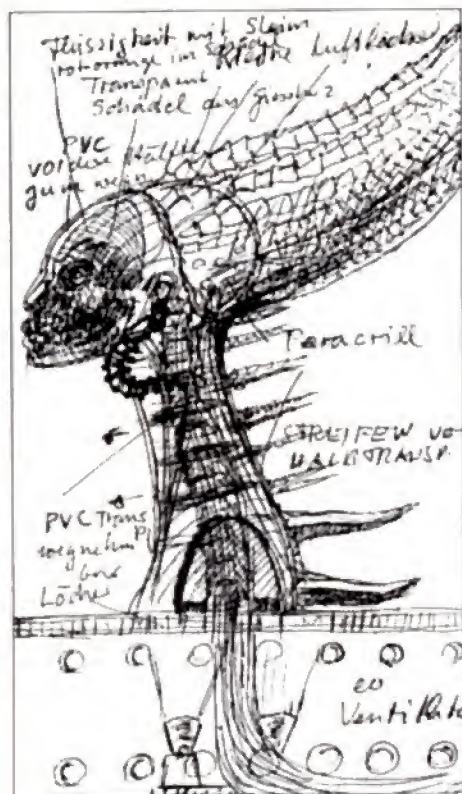
**Building Giger’s Sil, Marco Wust and Brigitte Von Kanel (l) cast model Nadia at Atelier Formart.**



Giger’s early design sculpt of Sil, Version IV, 1994, fashioned of polyester, zinc wire and bones. Inset: Boss Films’ CGI rendition which Giger disowned as “ugly.”







Giger's designs for the mechanics behind Sil's lethal tongue. Giger wanted to avoid the use of CGI to create Sil just with the use of makeup and puppetry.

on the picture." Giger's merchandising contract with MGM for the little-used Ghost Train called for only limited use, and only as it appeared in the film. According to Barany, MGM violated this agreement regarding the train almost immediately.

"I found out about it only accidentally during a conversation with Dark Horse Comics," said Barany. "I happened to mention to them that I had seen the first issue of their SPECIES comic book and noticed they substituted another dream instead of the Ghost Train and mentioned, not to worry, Giger is not likely to mind since it helps preserve the value of the train for future projects. There was silence on the line. I was told the Ghost Train was moved to the last book of the series. I asked for a fax of it. It was changed, as well, another violation of the contract. Since it had already gone to the printer, nothing could be done about it."

Dark Horse Comics had no idea that the whole concept of the train was Giger's. They assumed it was a script element provided to Giger by MGM, and that they could use and interpret it like any other element. Robert Conte, an associate editor for Dark Horse who has since left the company, told Barany that MGM never advised Dark Horse that the copyright on the train belonged to Giger. Noted Barany, "For that reason, and also because we lost the Main Title credit fight with MGM over the inclusion of the

train design, the only credit Giger got in the SPECIES comics was 'Sil Design, H. R. Giger,' which implies that it was the *only* element of SPECIES he designed. Dark Horse feels terrible and promised to make it up to Giger, somehow, in the continuing series."

Giger actually plans to use the Ghost Train in his own film project, *THE MYSTERY OF SAN GOTTARDO*. "I have been working together with Giger on this story as the editor for the last six years," said Barany. "We shall publish it under ARht Publications in book form with all the text and drawings, even before it becomes a film. The only way this will ever become a film is if we can get a deal in which we retain ownership, and Giger's interests in the property can be assured both financially and creatively. I don't see how that can be done without Giger as the producer."

Mancuso reportedly told Giger that if he had any ideas concerning the advertising he could feel free to send them. So Giger offered many sketches for poster ideas. One of them was a box-like structure showing seven wormlike letters in the word SPECIES surrounding an image of Sil. (Giger designed and cast the unused typeface for SPECIES, see opening illustration page 17.) Interspersed throughout are death mask likenesses of various members of the production crew who Giger felt get

continued on page 35



## SCRIPTER AND CO-PRODUCER

*Dennis Feldman on using horror metaphorically.*

By Dan Persons

One should consider carefully before telling Dennis Feldman that SPECIES is "just another summer film." Author and co-producer of the feature, Feldman explained his regard for "escapist entertainment" with a uniquely generational example: "My father [Charles K. Feldman, president of First Artists] had a movie that they were making at the company, a very distinguished movie called AGATHA. It starred Dustin Hoffman, it was photographed by Vittorio Storarro, it had Vanessa Redgrave—very classy, distinguished picture. At the same time I was trying desperately to buy for the company a movie called DAWN OF THE DEAD by George Romero. DAWN OF THE DEAD is a much more serious, much deep-

er, picture. For all that a superficial viewer might think it's a crass, cheap, commercial picture, it's not. It's a very powerful metaphor for our consumer society with all these zombies in the shopping mall. It is a brilliant, deep motion picture that's changed more about my view of life than almost all of the pictures I've ever seen. On the other hand, AGATHA, which appears to be a serious, deep movie is actually very unmemorable and not very powerfully meaningful.

"There's a real dichotomy to my view of how a movie can be meaningful. It can be meaningful more with metaphors and central images that are strong and powerful and that grab you even if they're kind of crude and direct. It's that kind of a medium, and AGATHA, for all its class and sophistication, was rather trivial and banal."

In light of that outlook, it comes as no surprise that Feldman considers his own film—in which an alien taking the singularly toothsome form of Natasha Henstridge, goes man-hunting in L.A. while she herself is being tracked down by a scientific team bent on her extermination—not just another two hours of empty entertainment. "My approach to the material was biologically and evolutionary. One of the things I wanted to point out was that we are the controlling or dominant species of this planet, as we see it, and we are the superior species. That's at some debate,

Feldman, visiting Giger's Sil workshop in Zurich, interested in directing the sequel to SPECIES.







Sill seeks to mate with a reluctant Whip Hubley. Feldman wrote the script on spec and revised it ten times in seven years to shepherd it to the screen.

because ants, for example, have a greater biomass than we do and they run their lives perfectly well, and just because they're smaller we don't consider them primary competition or consider them as running their world as successfully as we do ours.

"Putting that aside, what I wanted to point out was that if another species that felt it was superior was to somehow get on this planet, all our views of the lower species would reverse. We'd say, 'Hey, that's not fair, you've got to treat a species in a certain fashion. A species has rights, a species is not just something that tries to survive and propagate.' I had this very biological view that nature was about predation and mating, and I feel a lot of that comes across. [My original script] was more specific and scientific, it was much more science fiction than horror. There was a good deal of horror, but there was a great deal of science fiction. Now, there's a great deal of horror and a good deal of science fiction."

To create the project—started as a spec script and subjected to about ten revisions over seven years—Feldman took the unusual (for the film industry) step of actually researching his sub-

ject matter. "I spent a lot of time reading and a lot of time talking to scientists. I made a lot of good friends amongst the scientific community. I spent a lot of evenings over at UCLA at a group that studies the origins of the universe, and I became fascinated with the idea of answering these childhood, basic questions: What are we doing here? What are we? Why are there two different genders? Why do we propagate? Are we a species that just pursues selfish, individual gain or are we altruistic? Are we destructive and predatory or are we benign? What is love? A lot of these questions—really childhood questions—I [applied to] biology to see if I could find the answers, and I found a great number of them. It was a very gratifying experience for me."

Less gratifying, possibly, was the production process itself, where, it was rumored, Feldman was barred from the set by his co-producer, Frank Mancuso Jr. Feldman's own description of how production responsibilities were divided does not contradict those rumors: "We did a lot of things together, we did a lot of things separately. I spent a lot of time working with things like merchandising. I spent a lot of time

## SCI-FI/HORROR HYBRID

**"I had this biological view that nature is about predation and mating," said scripter Dennis Feldman. "The original script was much more science fiction than horror."**

overseeing the novelization, overseeing the comic book—which I wrote and am proud of—the video game, which is coming up in about a year. I spent a lot of time with the story material. I spent a lot of time of the script.

"Frank spent a lot of time on the set. Frank was also primarily in charge of the budget and the money concerns. We kind of divided things up—we did a lot of casting together, we did a lot of story stuff together, we did a lot of targeting of specific needs and desires, we did a hell of a lot of advertising together. And since, we've done some celebrating together."

Celebrations are clearly in order. Despite the generally hostile attitude of critics toward the film, the public embraced SPECIES, and many responding to advertising that positioned it as the ALIEN of '95. Not surprisingly, there's already talk of a sequel, although Feldman stated he'd involve himself with a second go-around only "if I was doing the directing."

Beyond that, Feldman sees no shame in the current production atmosphere, in which a science fiction concept only makes it to the screen if it's mated with elements of horror or action-adventure. "I love science fiction,

but let me say this about genre: it always seems to me that there's a root or really important, archetypal human experience in every genre. As I worked on the script I realized that the horror genre has a very biological root, in which teeth and claws—whether they're Dracula's teeth or Freddy's claws—are kind of our primal fear of other species attacking us or ripping us up. It's about the fear of what nocturnal animals are out there in the dark, or of the unknown. That is the base of the genre, and I do my best, when I see a genre, to rediscover its base meaning, and not to find a genre cheap if it survives hundreds, sometimes thousands, of years. I don't find science fiction, in its way, any more advanced or higher than horror. The mixing of the two—especially [since SPECIES is] such a biological film, with horror being the ultimate, biological genre—really makes sense to me and works.

"Yes, I'd love to do a pure science fiction. But action-adventure is also a medium that has a base meaning. If you really dig into a genre and rediscover—not just cliché over—its base meaning, I think these things have an incredible, tremendous force." □

Young Sill is grown in isolation as a scientific experiment with alien DNA. Feldman likes wedding the metaphoric power of horror with science fiction.







# SPECIES

## BOSS FILMS' "SIL" COMPUTER GRAPHICS

*Effects supervisor Richard Edlund on the latest generation of CGI imaging.*

*By Les Paul Robley*

Once Giger had achieved the genesis of Sil on paper, his work became the blueprint for visual effects supervisor Richard Edlund to create the title character within the computer. Edlund, a four-time Academy Award winner, has consistently pushed the envelope in the field of visual effects. Noted Edlund of his SPECIES accomplishments, "This is past anything that has ever been done before. It is like building a new violin and learning to play it. With today's equipment and technology, we can do things we couldn't have dreamed of even two years ago."

Now the optical printers of the past lie dormant amid a printer graveyard in Edlund's Boss Films Marina Del Rey facility. The hum and click-clacking of digital workstations create the new buzz in Edlund's four-phase quest to become a complete virtual studio.

"The phases have to do with the level of quality achieved for the director," Edlund explained. "Phase-One was a dinosaur creature we made a while back. Then we built an armature puppet for SPECIES. The creature is semi-transparent. You see the outer surface of the creature and you see through the skin. You see her skeletal structure and interior organs."

"Steve Johnson's XFX company built a solid version of it which was essentially hard plastic. The face, of course, would



Boss Films' computer Sil attacks, perched on Donaldson with the motion capture puppet.

have flexibility, but it has limited expressions. But it was valuable for certain shots [such as when Sil is in water]. So, the only way you can create this is by partial puppet, and a fully computer-rendered transparent version of the creature, which would take quite a long time to [physically] build." The film's effects are an example of CGI working hand-in-hand with prosthetics.

Before Phase Two could begin, a Boss Films sculpture of Sil was necessary. Edlund

The son of Sil, the creature's offspring.



A closeup of Boss Films' CGI Sil, based on Giger's designs. Below: The computerized creature as it perishes in the flames at the film's climax.







top of the cave. Right: Effects supervisor Richard Edlund (l) and director Roger imated the computer Sil, affording the director greater input during effects filming.

brought the sculpted cast to a company called Viewpoint Data Labs in Northern Utah to digitize the virtual creature inside the computer. One can measure the approximate amount of scene detail by the number of polygons (minimum units of detail used by the computer to remember surfaces). An average frame in TRON had 7,000 polygons with a peak of 15,000. THE LAST STARFIGHTER boasted 350,000 polygons with peaks of over four million. Utilizing this poly-intensive capa-

bility, computer-generated objects can be given far more intricate detail and movement.

SPECIES is probably the first motion picture to spotlight a completely "digital performance." According to Edlund, each frame of Sil's fiery climax is made up of 10-times the amount of digital information found in frames of JURASSIC PARK.

Once Sil was constructed digitally, it was time to make her move. This is where Phase-Two came into play. "There are



ed only fleetingly at the climax, one of 57 CGI effects shots Boss did for the film.







Sil attacks (above), with motion capture technology providing superhuman capabilities. Right: Rough motion capture image refined to final blue screen image. Left: Facial expressions were controlled by a separate program.



several different methods of approaching this," began Edlund. "The standard way that is out there now is an optical approach where you use several video cameras set-up in known positions that use multi-colored light, or white light bounced off of Scotchlite front-projection dots that have been placed on an actor. That, of course, is in real-time in that you can direct the actor by using videotape of the actor moving around on the set. But the actual motion capture is accomplished as a subsequent series of calculations.

"In the case of Sil, the action that she was doing was action humans couldn't do. We chose to go with a system that we've been developing for some time now which is a real-time motion capture puppet—like a rod puppet a few feet tall with high resolution potentiometers and optical encoders in all the bending areas—elbows, wrists, shoulders, backbone, legs, and so on. So it's basically a pretty limber puppet."

Edlund's crew developed a revolutionary new form of puppeteering called "motion capture" to animate the creature. They constructed a high-tech, two-foot high electric puppet which is attached to an overhead armature. Like a skeleton with transmitting sensors at

every joint, it was manipulated by the puppeteers—or digiteers, as they like to be called—to do the radical leaping from cliff-edge to cliff-edge required for the scene.

The puppet sends its positions by means of resistance values encoding data to a Silicon Graphics Onyx computer. This action is "cybergraphed" by a virtual camera in cyberspace, which is programmed to match the production camera's point of view. The high-speed Onyx instantly translates the puppet's movements into a detailed 45,000 polygon version of the creature in "real-time," adding texture, facial features, etc. and digitally compositing her into the actual scene from the film. This image is actually low-res when compared to the end result of a 160,000-polygon creature, but high enough for the director to view it. Phase-One started with a cartoonish character, which progressed to a very realistic version of the creature that is composited over the background in real-time.

This astounding innovation allowed director Roger Donaldson to watch the composited scene on the monitor and actually direct the actions of the puppet as he would any actor. Even more extraordinary was that this new motion capture system allowed the visual effects team to achieve in one day what would have once taken as much as three weeks in the old chemical-optical world of visual effects. Noted Edlund, "The process is so facile that for one

difficult shot, calling for the creature to jump and climb with amazing agility, we did 130 takes in one single afternoon! The motion capture that we capture is the 'directed action' that will then become the skeletal structure for the full-resolution [160,000 polygon] creature which will be created using CG. It is this kind of innovation that keeps me interested in the business of illusion. Audiences today are very smart; we have a responsibility to convince them that what they are seeing on the screen is indisputably real."

Boss was able to go in and tweak the action of the original motion capture if the director wanted to change something. Or, they could use parts of different takes and blend them together, or re-enter the program and carefully place the creature's feet in exactly the right position.

"We can go in and adjust motions and actions very easily, giving us incredible control," said Edlund. "We capture the body motion in the first session and then we go back with the body motion that works and then graft a face onto the body, also in real-time. In other words, we add the face onto the creature, then animate the face with waldos. All these calculations are happening in about two frames."

When the studio eventually gets to Phases 3 and 4, the director will basically be able to talk to the puppeteers as though they were the actors. "Phase-4 has to do with resolution and the ability to walk away with a

very advanced digital video version of the day's work, and be able to cut it in on an Avid," Edlund predicted. "I mean we're doing that now, but it takes a couple of extra steps."

In addition to the motion capture sequences, the wizards at Boss created and produced other visual effects witnessed in SPECIES. In all, there were over 57 CGI shots in the film, some four minutes of computer animation, as well as 120 digital matte paintings composited in the computer. Of the 100-plus

continued on page 61

Boss electrical engineer Jeff Platt and motion capture operator Andre Bustanoby with the CGI Sil puppet.





little credit after the film is completed. Two of the likenesses are actual photographs of agent Les Barany and writer Dennis Feldman, who were left out when the face molds were struck. Giger envisioned this merely as a teaser poster that didn't reveal much about the plot, but acknowledged the efforts of people behind the scenes.

With MGM's cooperation, Giger produced the poster as a valuable signed and numbered graphic by the artist, intended as a "Thank You" gift from the studio to the various department heads, film principals and promo partners.

The idea to use this image as a publicly displayed poster for the film was killed in its earliest sketch stage when Giger first presented it to MGM through Frank Mancuso Jr. However, since Giger believed strongly in the artistry of the image and the validity of the gesture, honoring, for once, the usually unsung behind-the-scenes personnel, Giger suggested to produce it as a limited edition silkscreen given away as presents by the studio, exactly as it was done with an ALIEN portfolio, by 20th Century-Fox in 1978. Everyone involved thought it was an excellent idea.

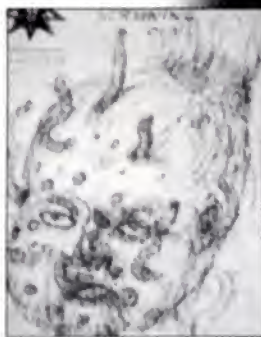
Although the production was in full swing at the time, Mancuso, Donaldson and Edlund juggled their busy schedules to make themselves available for a two-day, very uncomfortable life-cast session at the Boss Film Studios. Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc. donated their time to the effort as the three executives subjected themselves to the painstakingly slow and claustrophobia-inducing process. At the second session at XFX, molds were taken off Steve Johnson himself and Giger's publisher, James Cowan. The five molds, together with an existing one of Michelle Williams, were sent off to Giger with everyone's blessing. Giger already had in his possession a bust of Natasha Henstridge, supplied to him earlier for the design of Sil. Screenwriter Dennis Feldman and Giger's agent Leslie Barany, who could not be at the

## SPECIES' CGI BREAKTHROUGH

**"This is past anything," noted effects supervisor Richard Edlund. "With today's technology we can do things we couldn't have dreamed of even two years ago."**



Michelle Williams as young Sil begins to undergo a terrifying transformation. Right: Williams with XFX makeup artists Kenny Myers (r) and Bill Corso. Inset: H. R. Giger's makeup design.



and an even greater concern that the existence of cheaply produced and mass-distributed posters destroyed the value of the limited editions, not only for Giger, but for the poster's intended recipients. In his mind, the restrictions imposed by European law, protecting the so-called "moral rights" of authors, had been seriously violated. Giger also heard that the studio hoped to use the posters to promote the release of the picture in Europe in a similar manner. Since this was in excess of MGM's rights in the U.S., it was also in excess of their rights



casting sessions, provided their own photographs to Giger, and Giger's collaborator Andy Schedler was cast at Atelier Formart in Switzerland. Putting aside whatever creative differences that might have existed among some of them, everyone was united in their willingness to participate in the creation of an art-piece which would commemorate their involvement in SPECIES.

MGM publicity liked the poster so much they requested the rights for "two" gigantic billboard murals to herald the film's release in New York and Los Angeles. Much to Giger's surprise, they also plastered one-sheet versions of the poster all over some major U.S. cities, without crediting the artist and devaluing the seven-color Limited Edition silkscreen.

For months after the film's release, Giger continued to negotiate for the payment for his work on the misused poster. MGM paid the printer, Uldry & Sohn \$21,000, directly, and another \$15,000 to Giger, which barely covered his materials for the 187x131.5x32 cm. sculpture,

and the cost of photographing it. MGM also paid for the cost of shipping to Los Angeles the huge crate containing the carefully packed silkscreens.

Giger had been contacted by MGM to explore the possibility of obtaining permission for the usage of this original artwork, limited to the two billboards. MGM suggested that this could be of great publicity exposure to Giger in this country. An agreement was reached for this very limited display. According to Giger that is as far as it went. No additional usage rights were requested or transferred to MGM in the silkscreen, or the image contained in the silkscreen for advertising purposes.

According to Barany, MGM claimed all rights to the image on behalf of the studio. "In our opinion, MGM never secured all rights. In order to secure all rights, Giger must have been an employee for hire of MGM with respect to the silkscreen (which he was not) or there must have been a signed document transferring all rights in the silkscreen to MGM."

Giger viewed this unauthorized poster reproduction as a serious violation of his rights,

in Europe and, Giger felt, would require them to supply him with significant, additional compensation. Giger's attorney, Jerome Sussman, sent a letter to MGM and was told that a response to Mr. Giger would be forthcoming shortly.

MGM instead sent a reply stating, in effect, that they had licensed the use of the sculpted image for all promotional purposes without limitation, worldwide, in connection with SPECIES, and asserted all rights to the image on behalf of the studio. They claimed that a buyout had been made for the "world of promotional possibilities" and that Mr. Giger would not be entitled to additional monies. Finally, they also accused Giger of being in breach of his agreement with MGM with respect to the studio's copyright ownership in the designs of the alien creature "Sil." They claimed that Sil had been incorporated in the sculpture and silkscreens that have been sold by Giger without prior authorization from MGM. They closed their correspondence with the statement that MGM had paid Giger a "substantial amount of money" for a total





# SPECIES

## CLOSE ENCOUNTER NATASHA HENSTRIDGE

*The Canadian model-turned-actress on her high-impact movie debut as Sil.*

*By Dan Scapperotti*

The premiere monster designer of the last decade is H.R. Giger, the creator of the terrifying creatures in *ALIEN* and its sequels. His latest unearthly creation is a case where beauty is the beast. In the person of the stunning newcomer, Natasha Henstridge, Sil, a new breed created in a laboratory by combining human and alien DNA, wanders the landscape with an increasingly violent urge to mate.

Henstridge, the 20-year-old beauty who snagged the plumb role is a native of Alberta, Canada. Henstridge turned to modeling at the age of 14, and moved to Paris. She eventually wound up in New York where she continued her modeling career, appearing in commercials for such products as Old Spice and Oil of Olay. When Henstridge's commercial agent moved into movie casting he set up the young actress on interviews. "SPECIES came at the perfect time because I was ready to move into something else," said Henstridge. "I auditioned and went through the whole process, meeting the casting director and then the director, and the producers and that sort of thing. They gave me a couple of screen tests. It was a long process getting SPECIES."

The fledgling actress found that most of her movie direction came before the cameras were set up. "We discussed it more than directing me on the set, except for the little technical things," she said. "We discussed

it before hand and came to an agreement as to what we were looking for. It was more of that than actual every day direction."

For Henstridge the character of Sil seems to shift with each successive viewing. "It's funny," said the actress, "because every time I watch the movie I begin to see different things about Sil. For a long time I was saying that she's really naive and kind of lost in this world. Anybody can understand what that's like. Her feeling of having no parents, no family, that sort of thing. She's naive and out there in the world alone, just running on instinct because she's this half-alien character. After a while I started to realize that she's not that good. She begins to feel human behavior in a way. Like when the woman walks into the bathroom and Sil gets pissed off about it. For the first time she's starting to feel these human emotions. She becomes territorial. She's very instinctual, which I thought was

kind of interesting about the character and was the fun part to play. But in a way, it changes every time I see it."

Since most of the creature effects were computer generated, Henstridge was not forced to undergo extensive makeup. However, she didn't escape the rigors of makeup altogether and was a frequent visitor to Steve Johnson makeup studio. "I had to cut my thumb off," said Henstridge, referring to a scene where Sil cuts off her own thumb and that of her victim's to make it appear that she died in a fiery car crash. "Some people who are playing aged people or whatever and who have to go through serious makeup would be laughing at me when I say that, but I did have a prosthetics thumb. The thumb was the longest makeup period because they kept testing for the right color. They make a mold, a cast of my thumb, in the position that it would be shot in. Then, they recreate my thumb by

**Stranger in a strange land: Henstridge has a hot tub close encounter with Whip Hubley, operating on instinct to mate and perpetuate her SPECIES.**



Henstridge as Sil, with wrong turn barroom pickup Anthony Guidera.

making one up out of a plastic, rubbery material. Then they put it on with spirit gum and then match the color of your skin with airbrushes and things like that. They pull my thumb behind and attach the fake thumb. I cut it off. I had to cut it right too! I didn't want to spend another four or five hours having that put on again.

"My biggest effect," continued Henstridge, "was coming out of the cocoon, being wet and cold and slimed up. That kind of thing. That was kind of difficult."

While escaping her pursuers aboard a train, the young Sil, played by Michelle Williams, transforms. She becomes encased in a cocoon and emerges as Henstridge. "They built a cocoon on a stage making it look like a train restroom in one of the little compartments," said Henstridge. "They built the set upside down and tested it. They had the cocoon on the ground and the toilet on the ceiling and had a hole in the corner of the box. Then they had the cocoon made and slimed down a bit. They had wires going into it which made it pulsate. I would come in the bottom of the cocoon. My whole body wouldn't fit through the opening, so I had to go in one leg at a time, sort of a split. It looks like I'm falling out but I was actually coming up out of it and grabbing onto a trapeze bar that pulls me up. I pull my legs up so it looks like I make that fall. It was a very clever technique, I thought. It was very cold. They were heat-





Sensed as a genetic undesirable, Guilder gets insistent and killed.

ing up this jelly and stuff that they put on me for the slime. They were heating it up in crock pots, but it was still very cold."

The maturing Sil is still a child, a fast-developing child with an ever increasing sexual urge. Consequently, the role called for extensive nudity. "I didn't have a problem with the nudity," said Henstridge. "I knew in advance that there was going to be nudity in it and I knew why there was going to be nudity in it. I think that if there wasn't any nudity in this picture it would be kind of ridiculous in a way. The character has a child-like quality about her. A naivete which sets the character within context. She starts to realize that showing your body and stuff like that is suggestive of sex and she begins to have the urge to procreate."

Director Donaldson was very sensitive to Henstridge's situation regarding the nude scenes. "Roger was so good about that," she said. "So good that he would close off the set to everybody. It could be a little awkward in the beginning and he wanted to get the best out of it. There is one scene where I come running out nude behind some cars at a supermarket. They had the whole block blocked off so no one would come around there. So they were really very sensitive to that."

Next up for the beautiful actress is Albert Pyun's ADRENALINE: FEEL THE RUSH. □

## ON WORKING WITH MGM

**"Giger feels used and betrayed," said agent Leslie Barany. "He is reminded that the only true nightmare that Hollywood is capable of producing is a legal one."**

promotional buyout of the SPECIES sculpted image and MGM was not otherwise obligated to pay more. Up to that point, all Giger had received was the initial \$15,000 to cover his expenses and a *promise* of \$3,000 for the billboard display.

H. R. Giger's faxed response was "I do not want to work with MGM liars!" His lawyer reasserted that no written or oral permission had been given, either by Giger or his representatives for use of the sculpture image beyond the rights for two billboards. He also indicated that Giger felt strongly that the studio had taken advantage of him in every aspect of their relationship.

Noted Giger's agent, Les Barany, "MGM's letter was full of distortions and lies regarding their every assertion and they have since backed away from it after it was refuted, point by point. They instinctively went on the attack without, I suppose, even looking at the silkscreen, which did not include the creature Sil, only the lifecast of actress Natasha Henstridge provided to Giger by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc., with the approval of MGM and Frank Mancuso Jr., the producer. And to this date, not one silkscreen has been sold by Giger. His one-third of the edition had not yet been printed! All their letter

finally managed to achieve was to enrage Giger."

On September 28, 1995, MGM sent Giger's attorney a fax stating that they would pay a total of \$20,000 for a release of claims regarding the use of the lithograph, and set a deadline that the offer was good only until 6 p.m. that Friday evening. The trouble was, the letter was sent at 4 p.m. in the afternoon, Los Angeles time, forwarded by fax to Giger and his agent at 5:50 p.m., nearly 3 a.m. Switzerland time. MGM was, in effect, "putting a gun to his head," demanding that the artist make up his mind in ten minutes—in the middle of the night!

The sum of \$20,000 was only half of what Giger had billed MGM on July 23 for the two billboard installations, the photography of the sculpture, his own creative compensation for its design and for the after-the-fact settlement of its unauthorized use as posters. As of this writing, the poster issue is still not settled and "the bastards are just running up our legal bills," said Barany.

Added Giger's agent, "Giger feels used and betrayed. He set out, with the best of intentions, to honor SPECIES in an art piece through a joyous collaboration. Now, every time he looks at the silkscreen he is re-



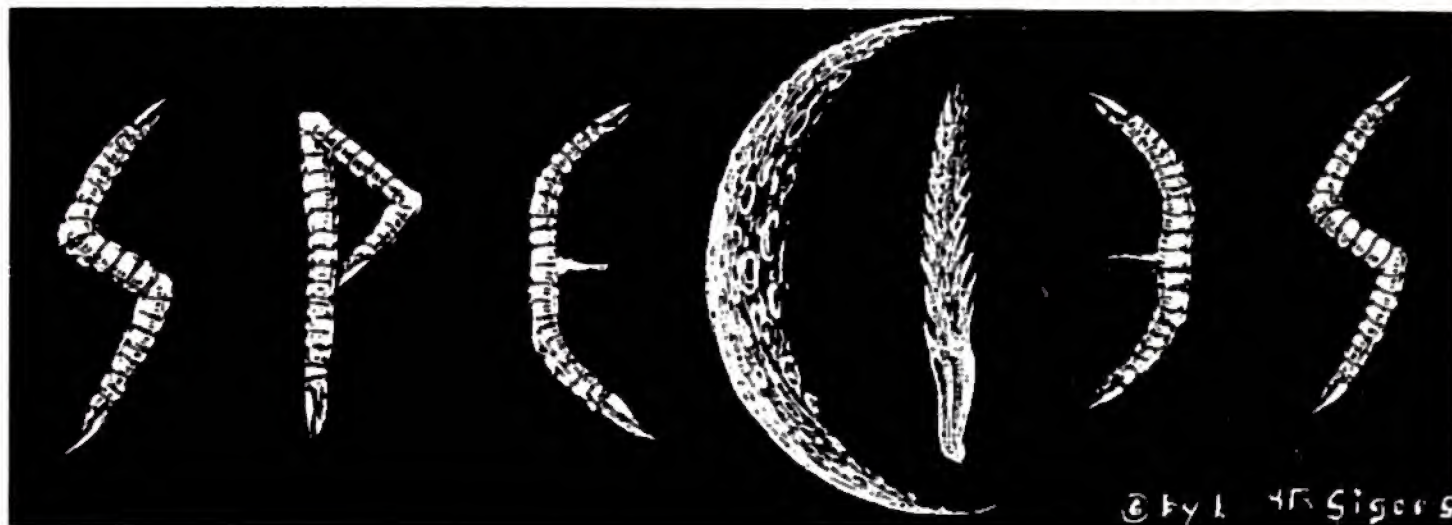
Keeping it tense, SPECIES director Roger Donaldson rehearses Susan Bartkowiak and Ben Kingsley.

minded that the only true nightmare Hollywood is capable of producing is a legal one."

To add insult to injury, an incident occurred at the Deauville Film Festival which seemed symptomatic of Giger's treatment throughout his relationship with MGM (20th Century-Fox, Giger maintains, was never the nightmare that MGM has been). Giger claimed that the studio did everything in their power to seduce him to come to France for the festival premiere of SPECIES. But Giger hates to travel, and even worse, to dress up and "smile like an idiot." It is not something he's good at.

It happened that Giger, his girlfriend Sandra Beretta (of the famous Italian firearm family) and the cast from SPECIES (consisting of Natasha Henstridge and Ben Kingsley) had been invited to attend a special

Giger's unused title design for SPECIES. MGM's final design retained the shape of Giger's letterforms, but the poster utilized a cocoon image that the artist felt aped the campaign for ALIEN too closely, as did the film itself.





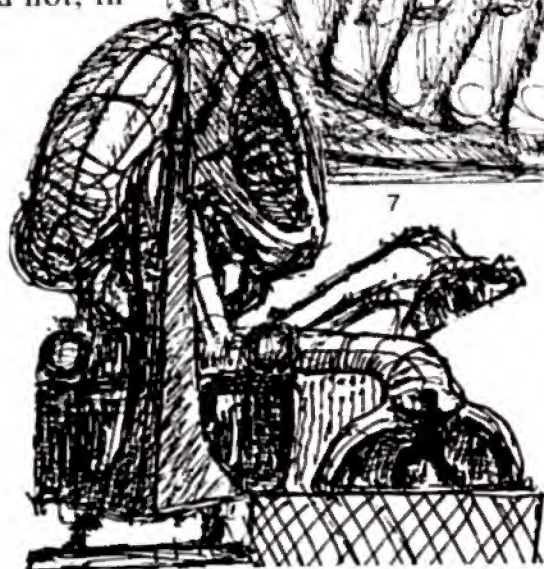
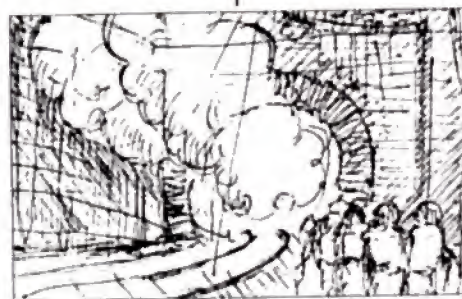
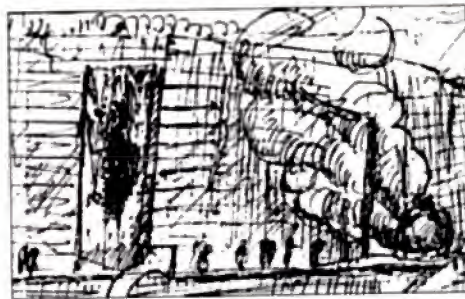
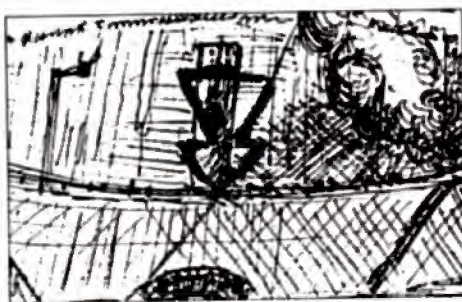
screening of Universal's *WATERWORLD*. After the screening (which Giger particularly enjoyed), the *SPECIES* group was invited to a VIP black-tie dinner hosted by star Kevin Costner. As photographers and video cameras were shooting, Giger and Sandra were guided to a waiting taxi. Suddenly an MGM executive intervened and told Giger that he was not allowed to enter the taxi, as it was only for guests invited to the party. This was despite the fact that everyone else in the *SPECIES* group had been invited, and that Giger had appeared together with all the other principals on daily panels and conferences. Giger and his companion had to march red-faced through the gauntlet of photographers, as they were led away on foot, clearly not of sufficient stature to warrant a ride in a taxi or an invitation to the dance. Giger later told friends that he had never been so humiliated in his life, and that he and his girlfriend had to walk back to their hotel in the rain. Also, his name had been completely left off the official show catalog of those involved in the making of *SPECIES*.

MGM later explained their version of the incident to Giger's representatives. They pointed out that it had not, in fact, been raining and that the whole confusion over the taxi had merely been a misunderstanding. Furthermore, even though it was unfortunate that Giger had not been invited by Mr. Costner to the dinner, it was entirely out of their control. Noted Barany, "The missed dinner invitation did not offend Giger, since he dislikes formal events anyway."

All of this regrettably has left a bad taste in the artist's mouth over future possible work in the event this successful film spawns another *SPECIES*. Giger said that if by some miracle he should be asked to work on a sequel, it would only interest him if he was asked to design totally new concepts, not just rehashed

**GIGER'S GHOST TRAIN**

**"The script had nothing about the train or a 'Ghost Train' nightmare," said Giger. "That was entirely my idea. They had no budget for it, but promised to consider it."**



Giger's storyboard design for the Ghost Train sequence, planned as a nightmare for the fleeing Sil. The action shows young girls waiting at a biomechanical station bathed in moonlight and deep shadow. As the train pulls into the station, the camera first pans right into its headlight beam and then follows it into the station as a vacuum arm (l) descends to scoop up the girls, then pans right as the train leaves the empty station. MGM completely rejected the scene.

variations of tried-and-true imagery.

It is interesting to note that at the end of 1995 "The Great Illusion," an exhibit commemorating the 100 years of cinema coincidental to the theatrical release of *SPECIES* in Switzerland, will be opening in the Kuntshaus in Zurich where Giger lives. In the course of 1996, it will travel to Venice, Vienna and Barcelona. Chosen

to stand at the entrance to the science fiction exhibit are Giger's most recent contributions to the genre, the Ghost Train (now back in Zurich) and a second model of the Steve Johnson Sil maquette. It is ironic that this is the same Ghost Train MGM found unworthy to feature more extensively in their film. The press conference which Natasha Henstridge attended in Zurich was held at the

Kuntshaus next to these artifacts being prepared for the exhibit.

Giger has a new book in preparation, to be published by ARht Publications/Les Barany Communications: *H. R. Giger Under Your Skin*, a collection of the hundreds of tattoos that have been made of Giger paintings.

As for films, Giger is ambivalent, now more so than after his bad experience on *ALIEN*<sup>3</sup> [see "Alienated" in *Imagi-Movies* Spring '94]. *ALIEN*<sup>4</sup> is a special situation, and if it happens, it will depend largely upon who is doing it. If James Cameron is involved as director, then Giger will be happy to work on it, if asked.

It is interesting how nearly every key member of the *SPECIES* production—a creative bunch to be sure—went to great lengths to stress, in the production notes, that they did not want any comparisons drawn to *ALIEN*.

"If they were truly serious about this, they would probably have approached someone else to create their Sil," mused Barany. "Or at least trusted Giger more to steer the designs in a fresh direction. In retrospect, I would say they did everything to invite comparisons. In my opinion, the producers wanted Giger's name attached to the film at least as much as they sought his designs."

The extensive use of Giger's name in the marketing of *SPECIES* has finally convinced Giger of that. In all modesty, he is not perceived strictly as a behind-the-scenes person anymore. Based on reviews and word-of-mouth about the film, it seems that the name H. R. Giger translates to increased revenues at the boxoffice. Said Barany, "I am certain MGM agrees that Giger's name, alone, was worth every dime they did pay." □

H. R. Giger may be reached through his agent Leslie Barany in New York City at 212-627-8488/Fax: 212-463-7983.

Special thanks to KLM Airlines, German Rail and Eurail Pass for their help in getting L.A. writer Les Paul Robley to Giger's Planet.





# GIGER

## GHOST TRAIN NIGHTMARE

*Constructing and filming the dream you never saw.*

By Les Paul Robley

Giger had long wanted to build his "Ghost Train," an idea dating back to his childhood, borne from a fascination with trains. It later became a recurring theme in his artwork. He tried incorporating it into former aborted film projects, such as the Alejandro Jodorowsky version of *DUNE* and Ridley Scott's *THE TRAIN*. In fact, the locomotive skulls on the *SPECIES* train bear a resemblance to the 1976 painting he made for *DUNE*. Giger thought *SPECIES* a natural fulfillment of his dream, as it could allow him to realize, in a working 3-dimensional form, a life-long passion.

The scene written by Giger called for the train to rumble in caterpillar-like, with each section moving independently and connected by accordion bellows. Vacuum cleaner arms extend and suck up younger versions of Sil who try to run from it. We hear

the awful sound of grinding machinery—like a garbage disposal. At the rear trail bony tiger ribcages for various life forms with hanging contraceptive baby Sils, similar to the artist's recurring dead babies theme seen in many previous paintings.

"That was entirely my idea," said Giger. "The script had nothing about the train or a 'Ghost Train' nightmare. Years ago, I worked on several train concepts with Ridley Scott. When I saw in the script of *SPECIES* that the little Sil escapes on the train and has strange nightmares, I had the idea I could work my Ghost Train into her dreams. They had not planned money for it in the budget, but they promised to consider it. I was so fascinated that I started with train ideas right away. Mancuso said, 'Be careful,' but I told him I will do this train anyway.

"The first version of the train, which we made out of normal skulls, was not so good. Then



Giger poses in his backyard in Zurich, holding the head of the Ghost Train. The designer filmed a video storyboard with his model, largely abandoned.

Cony de Fries visited me and saw in the garden one of my older sculptures, a biomechanoid head without eyes, one I made about 20 years ago. He suggested that we use this head but with bigger teeth. I could see this could work much better. Cony and I started on the locomotive skull together, and it was completed by Andy Schedler of Ate-

lier Formart, who built with me the other cars. The wheels and motors were made by Ball und Sohn, Modellbau, of Stein am Rhein, the finest model train manufacturer in the world. They make trains in all sizes.

"In the beginning, I wanted the train to function like a caterpillar, with an accordion-like structure between the cars, but

Setting up Giger's Ghost Train at its station for filming at Boss Film. Right: The brief train shot as seen in the film, chasing young Sil (Michelle Williams).





that idea didn't work out well. Atelier Kasper Wolfensberger Egmatigen motorized and activated the vacuum cleaners, installed the lights in the train and wired it for radio control. With another company, Atelier Steel and Dreams, I built the structure of the train station, the waiting platform and the two tunnels. Then Tanya Wolfensberger and I worked together on dressing the station with all the detailing. Everything in the station was planned and designed carefully for function. On the platform there was no way to escape from the vacuum cleaners.

"I am very happy with the train we did. If there was more time, we could have also made the vacuum cleaners function perfectly. I thought Boss Films could fix it easy in L.A. With only the help of the companies here in Zurich, a terrific Ghost Train was built, proving that we can make not only cuckoo clocks in Switzerland. It cost me a lot of my own money, but many of the rights still belong to me after the film."

When Giger first proposed the train scene to MGM it was rejected on the basis that the sequence was going to cost \$600,000 to execute it in the computer. They wouldn't consider it could be done any other way. So Giger went ahead and started building it himself. When MGM realized he was doing it, they told him to make a small model, and Boss Film Studios, the company providing the computer effects, would digitize it into the computer. But Giger ended up constructing the large model, and initially sent only photographs, which didn't give any indication of scale.

When Mancuso finally saw a videotape and realized how large

## GIGER'S DREAM TRAIN

**"A terrific Ghost Train was built in Zurich, proving that we can make not only cuckoo clocks in Switzerland," said Giger. "It cost me a lot of my own money."**



Giger works on the model of the Ghost Train at Atelier Formart in Eschlikon, Switzerland. Giger shipped the finished train to Hollywood for final filming.

it was, he instructed Giger to keep it under \$100,000 and warned him to go slow since he still had to sell MGM on the scene. Giger sank about \$80,000 of his own money into building the 20-foot-long, five zoll, fully working model, whose teeth, vacuum hoses and tongues all functioned by way of rotating cams attached to the wheels. This did not include any salary for his time, which he assumed would be forthcoming. Giger felt he had to go through these unusual steps to show them that his nightmare sequence was indeed possible to

achieve without CGI.

Once Giger had the train to his satisfaction, he realized he needed a station to execute the sequence properly. He spent another \$20,000 to construct the station, still keeping the total cost within the range Mancuso suggested. Giger was certain his scene would be accepted and become one of the highlights of the film. He believed viewers would come over and over again just to see this scene, and the train would ultimately pay for itself.

However naive this sounds, the Giger-conceived nightmare

sequence did not appear in the final cut, nor did it even materialize in test versions of the special effects. When the production balked at the cost, Giger's people began looking for other options. They contacted several effects companies, such as Chandler Group and Industrial Light & Magic, to see if they could save the sequence. Chandler quoted a figure of \$100,000, but this did not include any blue-screen digital compositing.

The sequence eventually wound up back at Boss, and visual effects supervisor Richard Edlund elected to shoot the train as a high-speed miniature, sans motion-control. When Boss shot the test, they filmed it without the vacuum cleaner effect and without the station. Giger had made very clear storyboards of how the 30-second sequence should be filmed in one shot. But the vacuum cleaners weren't working to Giger's satisfaction when he sent the train from Switzerland. They weren't dropping far enough to the platform and were moving too fast and unsteady. Also, the jaws of the locomotive were opening and closing too fast. Giger felt that with all the technical know-how at Boss, all of it could be corrected. He sent faxes to Edlund explaining how the timing of the vacuums were based on how fast the wheels turned. He suggested this could be slowed down by creating a different circumference on the size of the cam.

Giger had hoped that work would be done on the train before the test was shot. After he received the test he realized that no work at all had been done on it, and that it had been filmed exactly the way he had sent it. Obvi-

Giger's Ghost Train roars out of the tunnel (l), races down the tracks (c) and pulls into the station (r), during filming of a video storyboard in Switzerland.







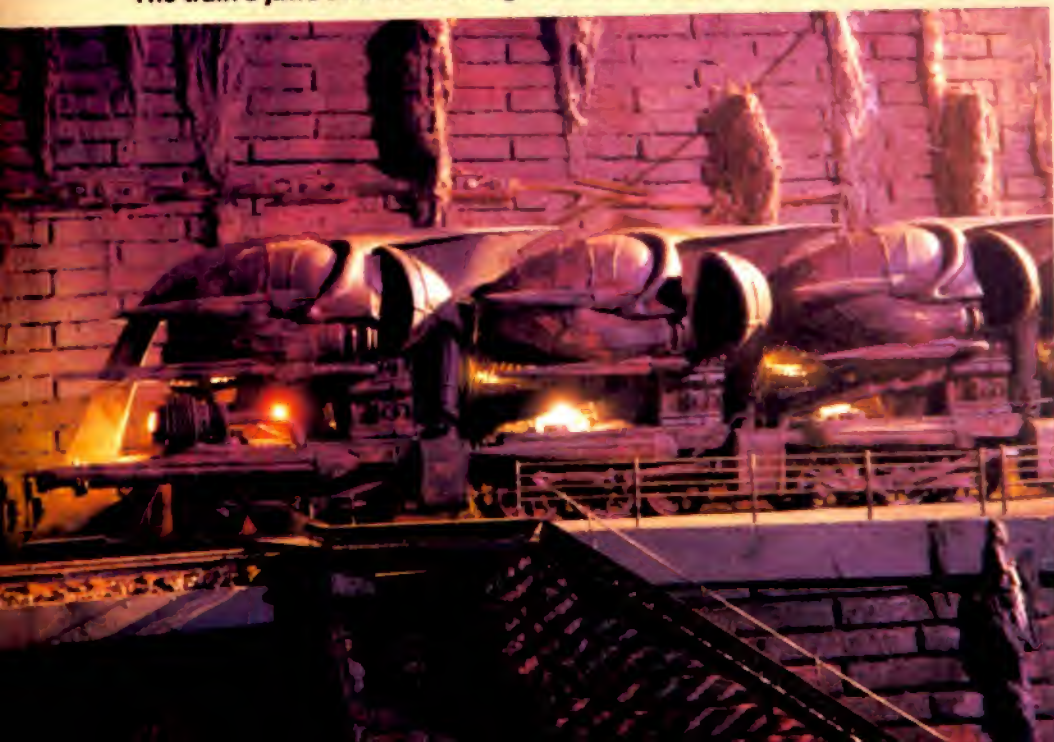
Giger supervises the filming of the video storyboard in Switzerland. The 20-foot-long, fully working model will be used in Giger's own film of *THE MYSTERY OF SAN GOTTARDO*, to be published as a book later this year.



ously, MGM was not interested in the sequence as he had envisioned it originally.

Giger's most amazing film effort rated only eight seconds of screen time, and no main title credit for the design of the train. In a behind-the-scenes promo film, more time is devoted to the making of the train than is the actual length of the scene or scenes. However fleeting its appearance, Giger's train still manages to make its jarring presence felt. It tears across the screen without explanation and, unlike the other nightmare shots, it is never referred to again.

The train's jaws and descending vacuums were powered with wheel cams.



Said Barany: "Soon our fears were confirmed. The sequence as Giger had designed it was not going to be in the film. Some hard choices had to be made, quickly. Mancuso early on told Giger over the phone to keep it under \$100,000 in expenses, and of course he also thought he was going to be paid, besides! But even if he misunderstood, if what was really meant was \$100,000 in total, it changed once the train was delivered. We were told \$50,000. That's all we have...are you in or out?"

"At first I advised him against it. I said to Giger, if they're not going to use the whole sequence, let's keep the idea intact and save it for a future project. Since the train wasn't in the original screenplay and no contract existed for it, it was clear Giger maintained

copyright. Giger said no, he didn't want to take the chance that it may never be seen. The most important thing was that it be in the film. He said, 'It will give it life.' He was also down a lot of money and at least he could get half of his investment back."

Giger took a \$50,000 loss on the train. MGM agreed to limit the ways the train could be used in merchandising. Giger retains all three-dimensional merchandising rights to the train because he was not properly reimbursed by MGM. The studio owns 2-D merchandising rights, *but only exactly as the train is used in the film*. They cannot, for example, in comic books, show the complete sequence as Giger designed it, or expand further upon it. MGM owns the copyright only on the 8-second sequence. Giger keeps the copyright to the train itself. The contract also allows him the right to use the train in any other future film. This unusual concession on the studio's part was granted only because the artist was not compensated entirely for his creation.

Noted Barany, "Giger had the simple idea that the train could be like any living actor, free to appear in a variety of films, sometimes for a large fee, sometimes for less. Sometimes in a big role, sometimes a small one. As the train appears in *SPECIES*, I would rate it an uncredited cameo, perhaps as a coming attraction for a larger role in a fu-

ture film."

If the studio recoups enough money to make a sequel, as the ending with the mutated rat leads us to believe that they may want to, they will have to get back to Giger and talk *new* numbers if they would like the train to make a scheduled stop. MGM will first have to reimburse Giger for the \$50,000 he is still out of pocket on his expenses, *plus* a respectable fee for designing it for the *original* film, *before* Giger will be willing to talk. Giger assumes that if the final tally of profits should deem a sequel worthwhile, clearing the books on the first film should not be a problem for the producers and the studio, plus they will be in a better position to pay him an additional fee for the use of the train in a sequel. For now, future film rights remain with Giger.

Although the film is long done, Giger continues to explore his fascination with trains, now as part of his fine art, and is currently building a different, much larger 7-1/4 zoll train which rolls through his house, out into the backyard and over a bridge above the "swimming pool." (It is actually a black lagoon; no one has swum in it for 20 years, save for a few creatures.) □

A fascination with trains: Giger on board the larger train model he designed to run through his house.







Sgt. Ross (Charles Bailey Gates), investigating the sinister deaths at a metropolitan hospital, is subjected to "exquisite tenderness" at the hands of a madman, makeup effects by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc. Below: Dr. Julian Matar (Sean Haberle) subjects hospital administrator Charles Dance to unorthodox medical research.



# EXQU

## Director Carl

By Kenneth Winikoff

When Carl Schenkel first got hold of the script for EXQUISITE TENDERNESS, he wasn't interested in directing. "I started reading it and halfway through I stopped and said, 'I think you've got the wrong guy for this.'"

After directing SILHOUETTE, a Hitchcockian made-for-cable movie starring Faye Dunaway, produced by his friends Alan Beattie and Chris Chesser, Schenkel said he wasn't enthusiastic about jumping into another film involving special effects. "What they had at the time was, basically, a FRIDAY THE 13TH kind of movie and I said, 'OK, This is not what I want to do.'

Schenkel admitted he had been intrigued by Bernard Sloane's story about a medical researcher whose amazing discovery could save thousands of lives, but turns out to have fatal side-effects. He found that the script had been rewritten to make it more "marketable," by adding some gore. "So I said, 'No thank you. I really don't want to do it.'"

But the persistent producers kept after the Swiss-born director who had studied economics in Paris and Berlin before leaving the academic arena to become one of Europe's top commercials directors. Schenkel was introduced to executives at Capella Films and his resolve began to weaken. "I told them maybe it was something I'd be interested in *if* we could change the script." It wasn't until Pat Cirillo was brought in to make substantial changes to the storyline that Schenkel agreed to come on board. Though filmed in Vancouver at the end of 1993, the film has not surfaced stateside, though it has been released in foreign markets (see review, page 44).

Schenkel said he wasn't attracted to the idea of making a "horror movie," as opposed to the traditional thriller-type film. "I'm not interested in all that gory stuff." But all the elements were there for a good suspense-thriller and during a break late one night in downtown Vancouver on the final day of shooting, the director said he was pleased with the way things had gone. "Pat's really done a great job on the script," he said. "It's all there. It's got its Gothic elements rolled into an almost futuristic thriller."

The revised script also triggered the creative juices of its director, renowned for his innovative camera techniques, dubbed "Schenkelling." The technique involves hav-



# ISITE TENDERNESS

## Schenkel takes bloody horror to the max.

ing several cameras working simultaneously, leap-frogging shots. Schenkel defended his technique. "It's absolutely stupid to do otherwise," he said. "You don't shoot a film starting at scene one and then go on. That means while you're working with one set of actors, everybody else sits around. They don't do anything. And when they light, I sit around and don't do anything. So why not leap-frog? Go from one place to the next. For example, in one room we shoot one scene and in the next room we shoot a continuation of this scene. And while we work on one scene, we light the other one. Then I walk over with the actors and the DOP and we shoot there. We're constantly going. So instead of 10 setups, we do 25 a day. I want to get as much as possible on the screen.

"It's in my own interest. I'm not doing this for anybody else. With double the amount of setups, I can finesse down to the detail. I can choose bits and pieces from here and there. Overall, it's a lot better for the film."

Twenty-five or 30 setups a day is a fast-paced production, one that can easily get out of hand if the man in charge isn't in complete charge. Schenkel paces around the set, binder in hand, and everybody else has to work at warp speed to keep up with him. "The art of working with Carl," according to EXQUISITE TENDERNESS director of photography Tom Burstyn, "is to tune into his mindset and be able to keep up with his speed. We follow him around with a 40-foot trailer full of lights and cables; he expects us to be as fast as he is. I've noticed that the people who are very good at their jobs like to work with Carl because he squeezes every last drop out of you. At the end, you're wrung dry, but it feels good." So good, in fact, that part-way through the shoot, the cast and crew began wearing T-shirts bearing the logo "I've Been Schenkelled!"

The producers EXQUISITE TENDERNESS were drawn to Vancouver, the third-largest production center in North America,



Director Carl Schenkel rehearses a victim of a maniac's hospital patient pituitary gland experiments. Schenkel's movie, produced by Capella Films, hasn't landed a U. S. release.

specifically to use the ideal location of the Crease Clinic at Riverview Hospital. "The reasons we came up here were great crews, a good filming community," said producer Chris Chesser. "But if it wasn't for Riverview, we probably wouldn't have come here at all." Set on 250 acres of beautifully forested hills and offering a panoramic view of the city, the Crease Clinic had the perfect mix of mystery and the macabre Schenkel was looking for. The real-life psychiatric patients would sometimes wander onto the set, mixing with the cast and causing immeasurable confusion.

Sections of the run-down Crease Clinic had to be updated with fresh paint, fixtures and furniture, fusing together old and new, an aesthetic that is very much the trademark of Carl Schenkel. The design team stuck to a monochromatic palette with emphasis on chrome and steel to give it a cold, metallic feeling. That cold feeling is evident in the set built for the stainless steel pathology lab, so futuristic in design that it was left in place and donated to the hospital not for medical use but for future film crews. The operating theater was constructed from scratch and then encased in \$10,000 worth of special glass for the film's shattering climax, when it is bombarded by 120 rounds of police bullets.

"We want people to get the same feeling from this film as they got from SILENCE OF

THE LAMBS or THE EXORCIST or ALIEN," said co-producer Beattie. "We want them to get on board this thing and for 90 or 100 minutes be scared out of their skulls. Then at the end, we'll put them back on earth, and hope that they've had a good time."

The idea of a hospital where the obsession to cure degenerates into an obsession to kill has been explored before. Schenkel admitted there are parallels with COMA and the horror genre of the '50s, but he said the film maintains a unique element of secrecy and fear that is thanks, in part, to the underground lab and

tunnel scenes. The effect leaves the film looking more "like PHANTOM OF THE OPERA meets COMA," he said. Roughly a third of the total film is set in the hospital and the darkness runs through the film like a cord.

Isabel Glasser was tapped to play the career-driven hospital administrator Dr. Theresa McCann. Glasser, a veteran of daytime TV and the Broadway stage, made her film debut opposite Mel Gibson in FOREVER YOUNG. She prepared for her role by touring a working hospital, but taking a crash course in surgery was no easy task. "It's so foreign to me," she said. "I was in this hospital, surrounded by all the equipment that Theresa knows everything about, and Isabel has no clue. Playing a convincing surgeon is not a small task, especially when you hyperventilate when somebody comes at you with a needle."

In fact, the emergency room theme left more than a few people ill at ease. "The reason Carl didn't like the original the first time he read it is exactly why he was the best person to direct it," said co-producer Beattie. "That's because he's very squeamish about blood and hospitals. We have a world-class filmmaker who was essentially trying to do to the audience, with a good piece of material, what he doesn't want to have happen to him in a hospital. The result is frightening."

The medical setting lends an air of fear that doesn't always lead to a payoff. "It's not



# EXQUISITE SHOCKER

*Schenkel delivers the goods in a throwback to '60s Mario Bava.*

Director Carl Schenkel made a genre ripple in 1984—and earned himself the dubious title of “The Swiss Master of Suspense” in the process—with his malfunctioning elevator saga *OUT OF ORDER*, a seat-edged contemplation on claustrophobic panic. Sadly, he’s never matched that fractured tension in subsequent genre work (i.e. *THE HITCHHIKER* TV series) although *KNIGHT MOVES*, his crude 1993 Hitch-cocktail of chess, Sherlock Holmes and serial killers, was noteworthy for delivering trashy

gore within a loopy whodunnit format. Now there’s *EXQUISITE TENDERNESS* to add to Schenkel’s crackpot chiller resume, a ghoulish and garish exercise in retro-slasher nostalgia that takes on board the best and worst of both those extremes.

Unapologetically treating Bernard Sloane and Patrick Cirillo’s dated script as a full-throttle horror thriller, Schenkel opens the stock story with a moody black and white flashback showing a young boy watching his brother die at the hands of an incompetent local doctor. Fast forward to Doctor Theresa McCann (Isabel Glasser), Assistant Head of Surgery and her toxicologist love interest Ben Hendricks (James Remar) investigating a murder at an anonymous city hospital. The prime suspect is bananas Julian Matar (Sean Haberle), fired from the hospital for carrying out dubious experiments into the regenerative powers of the pituitary gland (that old horror staple motoring the plots of *CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN*, *CORRUPTION* and *DOOMWATCH*). All Matar has to do is inject himself with a serum made of gooey pituitary secretions to cure any life-threatening illness or self-imposed wound. Unfortunately, a side-effect means he also turns into a slobbering maniac and, as Matar was that boy psychologically damaged in the first flashback, his derangement knows no bounds, so he starts murdering sundry patients and staff.

It ends with the usual nightmare-turned-



The germ of madness, young Matar (Jarrett Lennon) watches a doctor and his older brother.

unexpected-climax, then ultra-grisly death and nihilistic fadeout. Matar isn’t all bad, though. He does everyone a favor torturing hospital administrator Charles Dance by sewing up his mouth so we can’t hear the Brit actor’s awful American accent! With none of the cast acting naturally in story context—except the dependable Remar—and the coincidences piling up alongside the corpses, *EXQUISITE TENDERNESS* is both enjoyably terrible and terribly enjoyable.

Extra kicks are supplied by Schenkel’s use of multi-camera set-ups for a dazzling array of edits plus the numerous literary references and cinematic twists crammed into the overwrought wide-screen shock spectacular.

For all *EXQUISITE TENDERNESS*’ faults, Schenkel gives his New Age nerve-jangler a creepy propulsion which mines our morbid fear of hospitals enough to engage the attention and suspend belief above the patently ridiculous plot.

For a contemporary mainstream release it has a very high gore quotient. In Argento/*CREEPERS* fashion, Matar crushes his hand in lip-smacking close-up to slip out of handcuffs. Needle-phobics should be made aware that hypodermics come in all sizes up to the extra large and get savagely pushed into places where they don’t belong. And there’s the pituitary gland milking plus the blood-soaked ending where a glass coffee table turns into a rather neat execution device.

Perverse and deliciously lurid, *EXQUISITE TENDERNESS* contains enough oddball characters indulging in loony psychobabble, and tasteless violence laced with scream-inducing imagery, to hurl you contentedly back in time to the early '80s splatter era or the earlier days of Mario Bava’s tongue-in-cheek horror. Those were the days, my friend, and with Schenkel’s List ticking off each dog-eared cliché, they clearly haven’t ended yet.

Alan Jones

that gruesome,” Schenkel laughed. “It’s just that everybody’s afraid of needles, so of course we play around with that. The original script called for ramming a needle up [Isabel’s] nose. This we changed. We took a realistic approach rather than a gory approach.” [An attitude not borne out in the finished film.]

Glasser, who has played mostly supporting roles on the screen, said *EXQUISITE TENDERNESS* would be a “pivotal film” for her blossoming career. Despite the challenges of learning to be convincing behind hospital whites, she noted she was drawn to the project because of the story. “It grabbed me,” she said. “There’s a fine line between research and experimentation, and when it should be made available to patients. The concept of something that can speed the healing process drastically doesn’t seem that far off.”

James Remar came on board to play the quick-witted intern Dr. Benjamin Hendricks because he had worked with Schenkel before on three projects. The East Coast-based actor, who parodied Robert DeNiro’s *CAPE FEAR* baddie in the Carl Reiner comedy spoof *FATAL INSTINCT*, has a particular fondness for the thriller genre.

“I love it,” said Remar. “I grew up on *FRANKENSTEIN* and *THE WOLFGANG* and that kind of stuff. As a kid I was a total *Famous Monsters of Filmland* addict and as an actor, *TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE* was one of the best things I’ve ever done.”

Still, Remar noted some of the elements of the film he found particularly frightening. “The term ‘Exquisite Tenderness’ refers to pain when it reaches its most extreme and toward the end of the film there’s a tremendous amount of bloodshed. At the beginning of filming you’re sort of inured to it, but toward the end it began to get to me. When you’re shooting for 18 hours and you see fake blood, on a primal level it begins to look real.”

Remar, who required three and a half hours in makeup for his role as a tribal shaman in *CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR*, was glad to just be able to don a hospital smock for his role as the intern who abandoned a career as a combat photographer for a

Haberle as Matar, dealing with Isabel Glasser as Dr. Theresa McCann, whose snooping has gotten too close to revealing his horrible depredations.





“We want people to get the same feeling from this film as they got from SILENCE OF THE LAMBS or ALIEN or THE EXORCIST.”

—Co-producer Alan Beattie—

less stressful profession as a healer. He relished the on-screen tension between himself and Glasser.

Together, Remar's Dr. Hendricks and Glasser's Dr. McCann pursue the film's mad Dr. Julian Matar into catacombs beneath the hospital, a labyrinth of heating ducts and ceiling passageways. Matar continues his own brand of warped medical research into what he terms "Exquisite Tenderness" and the body count continues to mount.

Sean Haberle, a New York actor who graduated from the Yale School of Drama in 1992, viewed his major screen debut as the murderous Matar, a character he saw as having more than one dimension, as a challenge. "The [goal] is to take a character who at first seems one-dimensional and make him three-dimensional," said Haberle. "You take the script and you read it, and the first time you think, 'This guy is pure evil.' The challenge is playing not purely evil. The worst people never think of themselves as evil. Look at Hitler. He'd cry if he heard an animal had been hit by a car, yet he could order the death camps."

Schenkel claimed there are parallels between EXQUISITE TENDERNESS and THE HITCHHIKER, the HBO series he had worked on in Canada. "This is THE HITCHHIKER movie we always wanted to make," he said. "Everybody who was involved in THE HITCHHIKER series when it was big, Tom Burstyn and all these guys—we were here together in Canada at that time and this is what we all wanted to do, but we never found the real story for it. This is the perfect one, a total progression—the same kind of story, the same kind of elements."

Schenkel insisted it was the story, not the lure of working with veterans such as Malcolm McDowell as red herring Dr. Stein and Peter Boyle as police lieutenant Daryl McElwain, that finally convinced him to come on board. "I don't want to use stars just because they have names," he said. "I want to see something, even if it's just a little bit of the human element in there. That's the only way a thriller works. You can put in all those big elements and it still doesn't work. The only ones that do work are those with big action and the ability to keep the characters going."

"In the old days the audience cared about the characters and that's what creates suspense. You don't care about the people, you lose the suspense. It's as simple as that." □



Screaming for health care reform: the maniac's hospital guinea pig, makeup by Steve Johnson's XFX, Inc.

## BLOODY EFX

### Body count courtesy of XFX, Inc.

Although director Carl Schenkel insisted that EXQUISITE TENDERNESS was not filmed in the classic horror genre, makeup effects supervisor Steve Johnson noted that may be so, but—*ahem*—"That remains to be seen insofar as how they edit it. What we did certainly would constitute a horror film. There was quite a bit of gore effects, something that we've not been doing lately." Johnson's XFX Effects of Hollywood supplied Schenkel's bloody effects.

Johnson noted he was attracted to the film because it didn't necessarily portray gore for the sake of gore. "In most instances it was literal reproductions of surgeries—and surgeries done bad." Biopsies, dialysis and even open-heart surgery are staged as real to life as possible.

Depicting heart surgery with actors wielding the scalpels proved a formidable task. "It was pretty difficult," said Johnson. "We wanted to get actual reference footage of heart surgery, but, surprisingly enough, these days the doctor-patient relationship stipulates a certain [confidentiality] that prevents the film from being released. It was absolute murder getting ahold of footage. But eventually we did."

The illusion was made possible by means of a slantboard, which Johnson had used on AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON, VIDEO DROME and NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET IV. "The actor is real from the shoulders up, but he's slanted through the table." In other respects, however, "it was done as anatomically correct as possible, based on the reference footage."

Just this one setup took three XFX technicians a full day. Joel Harlow supervised the scene, assisted by Lenny MacDonald and Leon Lederach. They were on the set

every day in Vancouver to oversee each application. MacDonald also set up a particularly gruesome sequence in which a character is poisoned in her hospital bed by means of a caustic substance injected into her IV. "It starts burning her from the inside out and Lenny did a series of effects where we see her veins actually begin to bulge and aneurysms that pop and fizzle."

Some of the best stuff never manages to make it past the cutting room floor; other stuff never even gets to make it on film. The script had called for an experimental lab dog to get loose and attack one of the lead characters. For the fight scene, XFX's Norman Cabrera molded a head-and-shoulders Rottweiler puppet. "It turned out just beautifully, but they cut it out of the script before we even shot it." Johnson's crew also fashioned a horribly twisted lower torso for a scene in which villain Matar jumps off the roof of the hospital and crashes through an ambulance below, breaking his back in countless places. Again, it was never shot. For the scene where Charles Dance has his lips stitched shut by the killer, thin acrylic plates protected the actor's real lips with sewing done to foam rubber appliances over the plates. "It was pretty nerve-wracking," said Johnson. "Because if you missed, you could actually have caused some damage, and it's hard to tell where the real lip stops, and it was a very tight shot." To add an extra air of credibility—and to prevent a mishap—an actual surgeon doubled for the killer to sew up the rubber lips in front of the camera.

Painstakingly precarious procedures like these contributed to what was, in Johnson's description, "a very difficult show. A really, really grueling show." **Ken Winikoff**



# ROGER CORMAN

## PRESENTS

**Corman's movies for Showtime cable launch his new Cosmic Video genre label.**

*By Dan Scapperotti*

Few in the wacky world of filmmaking deserve the titles bestowed upon them and their fame is usually fleeting. Roger Corman, however, deserves, and has worked hard to maintain his title of King of the Bs. Showtime, the cable network, recognizing Corman's success and name recognition, contacted the filmmaker with an offer he couldn't refuse: a series of 13 feature films that would premiere on Showtime under the banner "Roger Corman Presents." After cable airings which began in July 1995, Corman used the titles to launch Cosmic Home Video, a new label devoted exclusively to horror fantasy and science fiction films.

Showtime wanted to recreate the product and attract the audience that used to fill the drive-in theatres years ago. Since Corman films were a staple of those theatres, they returned to the source for new movies. "Showtime wanted to have a series of feature films on science fiction and horror," said Corman. "They approached me because I've been doing this for so long. We got bigger budgets than I had when I first made them."



Director Scott Levy rehearses Alex Hyde White (l) and Roddy McDowall in *THE ALIEN WITHIN*. Inset: Corman, B-film king.

To deliver 13 films within a period of several months was a tall order even for the King of the Bs. But Corman had a couple of tricks up his sleeve. Three films ready for direct-to-video release on Corman's New Horizons video label were quickly plugged into the Showtime schedule and several of Corman's own films were remade.

"We actually remade several films that I had success with in the drive-ins," said Corman. "We remade *PIRANHA*, *THE WASP WOMAN*, *NOT OF THIS EARTH* and *BUCKET OF BLOOD* which is being released on cable as *HORROR CAFE*." While Cosmic Home

Video will take the genre product, Corman's New Horizons label will continue to release his Concorde Pictures titles at a rate of two films per month.

Executives at Showtime picked the four Corman films to be remade for their cable series. "They knew *PIRANHA*, *THE WASP WOMAN* and *NOT OF THIS EARTH* had done very well," said Corman. "They liked *BUCKET OF BLOOD* because of its quirky humor. They particularly liked the idea of *WASP WOMAN* because I originally made it, I think, in eight days for \$60,000. They felt that in today's market, if we spent more money on the Wasp

and really worked on it and made a good creature that that might have a good chance."

Two of the films in the Showtime package had already been shot in Russia and were awaiting video release—*HAUNTED SYMPHONY* and *BRAM STOKER'S BURIAL OF THE RATS*. The promotional material for *HAUNTED SYMPHONY* had already been sent out when it was yanked and redirected to Showtime, undergoing a title change to *HELL-FIRE* along the way.

"Showtime saw them and felt that they fit right in, particularly since they have huge production values," said Corman. "About two years ago Vladimir Dostal, who's the head of Mosfilm, the biggest studio in Russia, came to Los Angeles to speak to major studios about big budget co-productions. I got a call from one of his assistants saying that Mr. Dostal wanted to meet with me. I said, 'That's fine. I'd be happy to meet with him, but I don't make the type of big films he's talking about.' They replied, 'Mr. Dostal knows who you are and what you do and he has a special proposal for you.'

"He came in with three or four of his assistants and he said he knew that several times in the past I had gone onto sets that had been built for very big





For Showtime's **BURIAL OF THE RATS**, Corman filmed on huge sets in Russia, built for another production, adding horror and T & A as staples to the mix.

budget films and had reused the sets for very low budget films to make an inexpensive film look very big. He said that in Russia they very often built very big elaborate sets for their Russian films and just tore them down when the film was over. He said that if I could come up with some ideas to fit some big sets they were building they would go into partnership with me. I agreed, so we did **HELLFIRE**

and **BRAM STOKER'S BURIAL OF THE RATS** on giant sets. I would say they look like \$10 million pictures."

Corman had several scripts his Concorde Pictures was preparing to film so their schedules were expedited and rushed into production as part of the Showtime deal. "I wanted to do **BLACK SCORPION**, which is a sort of female Batman," said Corman. "We had a script that

was just about finished. Even with two Russian films, we still had to do eleven films in about five months to hit the Showtime schedule. I wanted to go with **BLACK SCORPION** because I liked the idea very much and I think it might become some sort of a franchise for us. They liked **BLACK SCORPION** too. So that became one of our key films.

"We had another project **SUSPECT DEVICE** that we were developing and they picked that one too. So we were able to get off and running with two films for which we had scripts. Over a period of time we chose the other pictures. The idea was that I would submit treatments and they would have to accept or turn down each proposal on the treatments. Normally they go through a development stage to develop a script which is what they wanted to do with me. I said, 'No, there's no time for that.' We were talking in November [1994] and I said, 'If you want to televise these in July I have to go into my planning stages based on your ap-

proval of the treatments.'"

While Corman and Showtime jointly picked the cast, Corman alone selected his directors, all of whom had previous experience under his auspices. "Jim Wynorski always wanted to do a remake of **THE WASP WOMAN**," Corman said. "When this came up I called him immediately. He has his own company now and he said he'd be delighted to come



Bloody extras wait for shooting on **PIRANHA**, Corman's Showtime remake. Inset: Doubling L. A. locations for the deadly Amazon.



Michael York (r) in a Showtime remake of Corman's **NOT OF THIS EARTH**, with Richard Belzer.





# BLACK SCORPION

*Joan Severance stars as Corman's cable TV night-riding vigilante superheroine.*

*By Dan Scapperotti*

For the action-oriented **BLACK SCORPION**, Corman tapped Jonathan Winfrey to direct. "I liked Jon's work," said Corman. "He has done several films for us, including **MANHUNT**, a Don Wilson martial arts action film. I wanted a fair amount of action in **BLACK SCORPION**. All of the directors of the Showtime movies had worked for us before. I didn't want to take any chances on a first-time director. I wanted directors I knew would come in and do the job."

Winfrey started at the Corman studios as a painter. He eventually talked his way into hiring assistants and within two years found himself running Corman's studio. He asked Corman for the opportunity to direct and soon found himself in Bulgaria helming **CRISIS IN THE KREMLIN**.

"I spent seven months of my life in Bulgaria which was a God-awful experience," said Winfrey. "About a year later I did **NEW CRIME CITY** in Peru. That was in 1993. It was a low-budget ripoff of **ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK** and **MAD MAX**. That was a lot of fun to do because Peru is such a great place to go."

Assignments on **MANHUNT** (**BLOODFIST VII**, with Don "The Dragon" Wilson) and **EXCESSIVE FORCE** followed



Severance as the policewoman by day who turns into **BLACK SCORPION** by night, a comic book franchise inspired by Batman.

before Winfrey took up the reins for **BLACK SCORPION**, starring the stunning and prolific Joan Severance as a night-riding vigilante.

"It's a low-budget female version of **BATMAN**," said Winfrey. "Joan Severance almost takes on this Dirty Harry-style character. She's seeking revenge for her father's death, and, as a police officer, the injustices she sees within the law. So in the daytime she's a cop and at night she's the Black Scorpion. She wears this sado-masochistic, risque black thing. It's not quite Cat Woman from **BATMAN**, but something you'd

see at an S&M bar."

The director was given only a couple of weeks to prepare for production and little time for casting. "Everybody who's in it is either my friend or someone somebody else recommended except for Joan Severance and Bruce Abbott.

"I had just come off an action picture with another actress and she trained eight weeks to do martial arts stuff. There was a scene in **BLACK SCORPION** where Joan had to do martial arts and the trainer showed up for a half hour of impromptu training; Joan got the whole rundown. And she got in there and kicked ass. If Joan had had eight weeks she would have been butting people's heads. She did a hell of a job.

"I think her persona changed. When she put that mask on she became, I felt, a different person. It was kind of interesting to watch that transformation. I think she liked it. I think she liked kicking ass and seeking revenge."

There can be no primadonnas behind the camera on a low-budget Corman film where time and budgets are always forcing the director's back against the wall. "The challenge always when working with Roger Corman," Winfrey said, "is taking a script that probably could be made for \$10 million and making it for \$1 million. If you read the script it's a completely dif-

back and do **WASP WOMAN**. That was one of my first choices.

"I said I wanted some sex and some action/violence in almost all of the films and Showtime agreed, providing it doesn't go beyond what would be an R rating."

As a producer, Corman tries to maintain control without being intrusive. As a filmmaker himself, he understands that things will always go wrong on a movie set. "No picture goes perfectly," he said. "I accept the fact that people are human, errors are going to happen, things are going to go somewhat wrong. The only time I get angry is when things go wrong more than what I consider to be normal and more for problems that should have been solved."

Corman chose Terry Winkless to direct **NOT OF THIS EARTH**, the story of an alien who comes to Earth seeking a new blood supply for his dying planet. The alien wears a pair of dark sunglasses because his uncovered eyes emit deadly rays. Corman directed the original himself in 1957 and hired Jim Wynorski to direct an earlier remake starring Traci Lords in 1988. "Terry has done three or four pictures for us," said Corman. "Most recently a picture in South America with my wife

Jennifer Rubin starred as the titular monster in Corman's Showtime remake of **WASP WOMAN**, his 1960 shocker.





## CORMAN'S GOTHAM PRETTY

**“It’s a low-budget female version of BATMAN,” said director Jonathan Winfrey. “When Joan Severance put on that mask she changed. I think she liked kicking ass.”**

Did he know Corman was looking to establish a franchise with the character? “Absolutely,” said Winfrey. “You’ll see five BLACK SCORPIONS. No question about it.”

Most of the film was shot in the downtown Los Angeles warehouse area where there were no crowds to hamper the filming. “There are some homeless people,” said Winfrey, “but you send them off to one area of the street so you can get exterior street scenes. Most of the movie was shot at night.”

Unexpected problems must be faced regularly on low-budget films and must be addressed immediately or a film can garner budget-busting delays. Winfrey had only one night to shoot at an abandoned refinery when he had problems. Recalled Winfrey, “Joan came down and said she didn’t want to work there. She felt that there was the possibility of being contaminated by some kind of cancerous gas or something life threatening. So she left. That posed a problem because we needed her in her Black Scorpion outfit. We had to throw the stunt double into the outfit, although she was much smaller than Joan. I knew that I could shoot a couple of close-ups of Joan later and I would be able to get away with it. That was a hassle.”

Other problems also plagued Winfrey. High-speed chases he had choreographed in his head would have to be re-thought when car problems popped up. “The cars wouldn’t show up on time,” said the frustrated director. “We had one car. What can we do with one car. You can’t do a chase with one car. Then another car would show up and then one wouldn’t run. Then the Black Scorpion would show up but it wouldn’t run. We’d have five cop cars, which is unheard of in a Corman movie. Great. But then the five cop cars were

supposed to be chasing the Black Scorpionmobile, but that wasn’t running. You never see the Black Scorpion being chased by five cop cars. We had to cut around that to make it work. It was a fucking headache.”

The violence quotient was taken care of but the second rule of a Corman production had to be faced. “Roger has to have a strip joint in all his films,” said Winfrey. “So I called mine the Donkey Bar. There’s also a major nude scene when Joan Severance seduces her partner Russo played by Bruce Abbott. Roger loves Joan Severance. She’s a very lovely woman. She’s just a beautiful woman.” □

Noted director Jonathan Winfrey, “When Severance put on that mask she became a different person.”



Severance as BLACK SCORPION, kicking ass after just 30 minutes of on-set impromptu martial arts training, avenging the crime of her father’s death.

ferent story than you end up with because he doesn’t give us any money to do anything. We had to make BLACK SCORPION in 20 days. We had this morphing stuff so we had this second unit running around for me to get shots.”

A high speed car chase opens the film and the director shot it in one night despite a plethora of mechanical and timing problems. “We didn’t get our first shot off until five hours into the night because the equipment didn’t show up on time or it didn’t run. Roger’s not a poor guy. The son of a bitch bought this black Oldsmobile for \$17,000.”

“The bottom line is you learn how to do things really fast. Roger has never taught me anything. I learned by running his studio and kind of seeing the tricks that were pulled. He cares what the end product looks like but you’re not going to look good if you’re out there throwing a temper tantrum and not getting the work done, trying to figure out the problems of no

money and no time. You’ll just look like an ass.”

Darcy, Joan Severance’s character, drives a Corvette serviced by her friend, Argyle, played by Garrett Morris. When night falls, Darcy and her car undergo a dramatic change. “Garrett Morris, who is this mechanic weird guy,” said Winfrey, “is able to make this car turn from an orange Corvette into this Black Scorpionmobile, which is really a Porsche. A Porsche on steroids is what it looks like. She pushes a button and suddenly there’s this car. Which is kind of cool.”

Filming in January and February of 1995, the crew of BLACK SCORPION was faced with unseasonable rain and floods which helped to dampen the shoot for Winfrey and his team, causing delays. “I take my craft very seriously,” Winfrey explained, “but I decided to have a lot of fun with it. We went over the top with it basically.”



# NOT OF THIS EARTH

*Corman's '50s shocker gets updated once again.*

*By Dan Scapperotti*

Why remake a film that was remade just seven years ago? "It keeps working," answered director Terry Winkless, who directed Corman's new Showtime remake starring Michael York. "It's Dracula transposed. It's Dracula meets Sci-Fi. Or horror meets Sci-Fi. It's a space vampire in a way. The beats are the same in the story but what makes up those beats

The poster of Corman's 1957 original, which starred Paul Birch as the alien, with Beverly Garland.

is different. The vacuum cleaner salesman, for instance, becomes a religious fanatic who knocks on the wrong door."

According to Winkless the new remake is closer to Corman's own 1957 version, updated by screenwriter Chuck Moore. "The writer did a good job of paying attention to the fact that if you're looking for blood to save your own planet in another solar system, then you've come to a very ironic place to do it at in this time in history. Earth ain't necessarily the best place to find blood. In fact we wonder in the script if the fatal diseases that are being brought forth in people's blood is really the Earth's way of reacting to what it thinks is a human virus."

The director was impressed with Michael York's interpretation of Johnson, the alien, a role that has been played by Paul Birch and Arthur Roberts. "Michael York took the role to a place that you would never guess it to be on the page," said Winkless. "He is so sympathetic. He's a good soldier. You're totally empathic to what his mission is and he keeps getting these messages from his people back on his planet that don't quite click.

"We added another element in fact in the editing. There's a



Michael York plays the light-sensitive alien toting an aluminum suitcase in Corman's Showtime remake, which followed a 1988 version with Traci Lords.

lot of psychic speech going on between Michael York and the guy giving him instructions from his planet. I realized that since that's the case, it's psychic, nobody is moving his mouth so that I could rework the plot in a more complicated fashion than was originally in the script. I could introduce a whole new plot element there, namely that they're not entirely being honest with him."

At York's disposal is his other-worldly briefcase. "When York gives a command to his briefcase," said Winkless, "from out of a little paper baggie inside the briefcase, grows an eight-foot jelly fish sort of on-fire, transparent thing, which floats

through the city streets and goes off and does his bidding. It kills the guy who has been helping him to cover up the evidence that Michael York's character has been here. It's a great effect."

The challenge for Winkless was to "never lose the sense of reality because what we're positing here is so outlandish that it borders on camp and I didn't want it to go into camp. I wanted to play it straight. The people had to be real. The main character, this guy Johnson, had to be sympathetic and what he was doing was something that we could go along with, otherwise it would be dull. Walking that tightrope was the challenge, I think." □

The gremlin in Michael York's briefcase, monster effects by John Buechler.





Julie. For NOT OF THIS EARTH he was doing a fairly complicated film and a technically difficult film, but also a film that was very much dependent on the acting. We had a very good actor, Michael York, playing the lead and Terry, having done some acting himself, I consider a very well-rounded director and I chose him for that."

Winkless was a screenwriter for ten years before he stepped behind the camera. He, along with John Sayles, adapted THE HOWLING for the screen. His first directing assignment was THE NEST in 1987. "Julie Corman was looking for a first-time director," said Winkless. "I was the guy that wanted more than anybody else to do a film about cockroaches that take over an island."

Subsequently, Winkless, who grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, directed the first BLOODFIST film in the Philippines as well as CORPORATE AFFAIRS, BERLIN CONSPIRACY, which was filmed in Bulgaria, and WHITE WOLF II: LEGEND OF THE WILD.

Mike Elliott, Corman's executive producer, offered NOT OF THIS EARTH to Winkless telling the director, "It starts in two weeks. Here are your actors. Here's where you'll probably be shooting. Here's your script. Now go for it." Looking at the cast list which included York, Richard Belzer, Mason Adam Rochelle and Parker Stevenson, Winkless decided to take the job.

The film boasts several computer graphic effects. In order to blend the physical effects created by makeup veteran John Carl Buechler and the CGI material, Winkless linked the two effects crews. "The CGI effects are Buechleresque," said Winkless. "It's gooey and icky. It's stuff that sort of makes us jump. He knows what to do with a can of ultraslime."

Buechler himself plays York's superior on his home planet. "He is somewhat Star Trek-y looking," said Winkless of his makeup effects supervisor. "He doesn't look like an ordinary guy on the street. He's got a great big head and a great big sort of horn coming off it."

Shooting the film involved a

## UPDATING '50S CORMAN

**"If you're looking for blood to save your own planet in another solar system," noted director Terry Winkless, "then you've come to a very ironic place to do it here."**



Terence H. Winkless (l), who directed Corman's latest NOT OF THIS EARTH remake, rehearsing Ben Gazzara for Corman's SCENE OF THE CRIME.

motorcycle and car chase which ends in a fiery crash, as alien Michael York tries to escape in a Rolls Royce, "the motorcycle chases the Rolls around Griffith Park," said Winkless. "We took the shell of a Rolls Royce, one that didn't have an engine and didn't run, and the guys towed it up to the top of this cliff. They aimed it at the edge and took a pickup truck and got behind it and shoved it off as fast as they could. We had to do it in two takes. You can't tell now that its together. We shoved it over the edge and it landed and we cut the cameras and then we walked in and we put the charges there and we rolled the camera again and made it explode."

Director Scott Levy did double duty for Corman on the Showtime series directing both ALIEN WITHIN and PIRANHA. "Scott started with us actually as a production assistant in the studio," said Corman, "and moved up to assistant director and second unit director. What Scott really brought is a great technical ability which was particularly important on PIRANHA. All of these films cost considerably more than the originals. The original WASP WOMAN cost \$60-70,000 and

the new WASP WOMAN cost about \$2 million. Allowing for inflation the remake of PIRANHA cost a little bit less than the original PIRANHA [filmed in 1978]. Everything else had a higher budget. I wanted Scott, who is one of our most able directors from a technical standpoint, to handle that film because it was so complicated."

After four years with the Corman studio rising from production assistant to production manager, Levy was given the opportunity to direct MIDNIGHT TEASE in 1994. The Oregon native then helmed the science fiction adventure OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN, which was rerouted to the Showtime package as ALIEN WITHIN.

"I love the genre," said Levy of science fiction. "It was a good opportunity. I think the script borrowed from a lot of Hollywood horror sci-fi films. The formula's there. My goal is to get the action and the story going so that although it may fall into some of the classic cliches, it's still a lot of fun to watch."

Heading the cast of ALIEN WITHIN, which includes Alex Hyde-White, Melanie Shatner and Corman veteran Don Stroud, was Roddy McDowall

who more than impressed the young director. "He's a great actor," said Levy. "Always the professional and really a great guy to work with. It was a little intimidating when I heard that he had signed on. This was my second film. I had never directed an older actor before. Here is a guy who has made hundreds of movies and directed some himself. So I was a little intimidated. I was 29 years old at the time and I remember growing out my beard and doing everything I could to look older. He was very respectful and the consummate professional."

Despite the low budget, ALIEN WITHIN includes several establishing shots of a futuristic underwater facility. Were these budget-busting effects? Not quite. "In the great tradition of Roger Corman movies," said Levy, "we did a little borrowing from our other movies for the underwater sequences, including LORDS OF THE DEEP. I had fifteen days to shoot the film."

Following ALIEN WITHIN Levy took up the reins for a big-budget Corman film called BABY FACE NELSON. The director was still in the editing stage when PIRANHA was offered to him. "They took the old John Sayles script, made some slight changes and sort of modernized it a bit," he said.

Despite his budget, Levy

Alexandra Paul, William Katt and Darleen Carr in Corman's cable TV remake of 1978's PIRANHA.





avoided a dependence on shots from the original. "We didn't use a whole lot of stock footage from the first film," he said. "We had our own piranha built. Some really excellent hand puppets and rod puppets from John Buechler's MMI Effects. They did all the CARNOSAUR movies for Roger."

The challenges on PIRANHA were mainly physical, shooting extensively on locations. "It's very difficult to make a movie on a river or any body of water in Los Angeles," said Levy. "There aren't a whole lot of bodies of water around here. In the original they got to film in Texas and had a longer shooting schedule and more money. We filmed entirely in and around the Los Angeles area. When you go to another state it's very easy to get extras. Everybody's very excited to be in movies, while in Los Angeles it's, 'Oh, another movie,' and you have to pay for everything. It's not that they come out for a T-shirt or anything."

"We picked the coldest month of the year to get people in the water. So a lot of the time when you see people being attacked by piranha and they're shaking and shivering, it's because they're simply freezing to death."

Most of the underwater shots were filmed in a day. Using an old swimming pool in the Sun

**Morgan Englund as an alien plastic surgeon from outer space, making his entrance in NOT LIKE US.**



## CORMAN'S BOTTOM LINE

**"We turned WATERWORLD down as too costly. I wanted a picture in that vein for about \$600,000. I thought it might cost \$1 million to make the film well."**



**Jonathan Winfrey, who directed BLACK SCORPION for Corman, directing his first Corman film, 1991's CRISIS IN THE KREMLIN, on location in Bulgaria.**

Valley area seemed like a good idea to the director until the production was shut down for a half-day during a hail storm.

"We built a whole underwater smelting plant control room and submerged it in the deep end of this pool. We shot piranha attacking Bill Katz underwater in the shallow end. It's all very politically incorrect. The only way to get rid of them is to pollute the water."

Levy was able to direct his cast and crew underwater without having to don a wet suit and scuba equipment himself. "We had this underwater speaker system," he explained. "We simply hooked the camera up to a monitor and put it on the side of the pool. Since the camera was moving all over the place it was just hard-wired to this monitor and I had this CB radio mike and was able to talk to the camera people under the water. It didn't go right into their ear. We just put it in the water and they could understand every single word I was saying as it traveled through the water. It was amazing. Someone told me they had developed it on THE ABYSS."

The opening scenes of the pool where the first victim is

claimed was actually an abandoned Nike missile site on top of a mountain in Chatsworth. "That was a great location," said Levy. "I guess they pulled the missiles out in the '70s or '80s. There are these great old buildings and all these sewage pools. We simply brought in one more pool so it really looked like a place where the piranha would be bred."

"I had 22 days and I shot a lot of film," said Levy. "A rare opportunity. I needed those days because the film is so effects heavy and there are so many sequences right on the water. It was like Roger Corman's own little WATERWORLD that we were trying to avoid."

Corman laughed at the thought, and claimed that he actually passed on filming WATERWORLD himself. "We turned it down because we thought it would be a little too expensive," said Corman. "I wanted a picture in that vein for about \$600,000 and having shot on water several times I thought it would cost \$900,000 or maybe even a million dollars to make the film well. So we passed because of the budget."

For SAWBONES, Corman picked Catherine Cyran to direct. "She had done several films for us before," said Corman. "She started with my wife's picture, WHITE WOLF and then she did IN THE HEAT OF PASSION II for us. I thought of SAWBONES as a suspense horror film with a little bit of quirky humor and I like the humor that Catherine is able to bring to her films."

After finishing college Cyran worked on several political campaigns until she felt burned-out and turned her considerable talents in another direction. Her interest in writing led her to the movie industry where Corman offered her a job as his assistant. From there things moved quickly. Cyran found herself writing scripts, producing films and directing WHITE WOLF for the Disney Channel, for which she received an Emmy nomination. "I didn't win," she said, "but it was a great honor being nominated for my first film."

A friend of Cyran's, Sam Montgomery, wrote the script to SAWBONES, the story of a mad medical student whose failure to be accepted into medical school drives him over the edge and he begins to conduct illegal and deadly operations. The film was a Corman project that had failed to get a production date until the Showtime package came along. Being familiar with the script, Cyran quickly volunteered for the assignment (see sidebar, page 53).

Other films in Corman's Showtime package, currently airing on cable, are VIRTUAL SEDUCTION, DARK SECRETS, LAST CHANCE and NOT LIKE US.

The success of the cable movies and Corman's remake strategy lends to the inevitable question: when is Corman going to remake ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS? "We probably will be making that fairly soon," he said. "That's a particularly complicated one especially in today's market where you need more special effects. More complicated and better special effects than we had in the original. We probably will be making that within the year." □



# SAWBONES

*Corman's slasher entry among the package of 13 Showtime movies.*

By Dan Scapperotti

SAWBONES, the story of a mad medical student, was shot on L.A. locations at the Queen of Angels Hospital, the Ambassador Hotel and a convent in Hollywood which became the home of Willie, its crazed doctor.

Directed by Emmy-nominated Catherine Cyran from a long-in-development script by Sam Montgomery, the horror story called for a high gore quotient. "Showtime has a slightly lower or higher standard when it comes to gore," said Cyran. "They wanted less. I knew that Roger wanted a lot of gore in his version, because he'll be distributing it on video. So I shot a lot of gore and cut a little bit of it out for Showtime."

The blood factor was no problem for the director. "One of the first movies I wrote and produced for Roger was called SLUMBER PARTY MASSACRE III in which we basically slaughtered five or six people and with great quantities of gore. I really got used to it. Most of it was just blood and animal organs. First my art department brought me some little prosthetic organs. Little rubber, plastic livers and things like that. They didn't look very good, so I told them just to go and get me some beef liver and stuff from the grocery store and they did, although it tended to reek once in a while on the set, but it looked pretty good."

Cyran concentrated on creating a dark and ominous mood for her film although some humor crept in. "It wasn't the kind of jump out of your seat film," she said. "Despite the fact that there are some dark campy scenes, there's humor in the film which is unavoidable when you're shooting an on-screen replications scene, which is



SAWBONES director Catherine Cyran, Corman's assistant-turned-Disney Emmy-nominee.

ridiculous."

The horror films that Cyran admires most are those that were produced in the '70s. Films like THE OMEN and ROSEMARY'S BABY. "I wanted to try and get that kind of brooding, threatening, unsettling, chilling tone. I'm proud of this because I'm proud of the actor, Don Harvey, who played the doctor."

To maintain the suspenseful tone, Cyran delved into the personality of the

killer. "I went into his background, instead of just making him a bizarre, inexplicable killer. My favorite parts of the film are those that probe his past, his reasons and his personality. He comes off as a pathetic character in flashbacks with his abusive father. You learn something about him and although he is a nasty character, he is also a sad character. That's what I put into the film most of all. I liked the dramatic aspect of the film, and Don Harvey did a great job."

A sidelight to the production is the name of one of the buildings on the alleged campus. Cyran Hall. How many location scouts did the director use before she found that? "I am not Alfred Hitchcock," said Cyran with a laugh. "I have no interest in any way to put myself in my films. We were at the Amba-



Don Harvey as Willie, the demented medical student whose failure to be accepted drives him over the edge, conducting deadly operations.

sador Hotel and we were in the courtyard and we wanted to make it into the courtyard of a campus so I asked my production designer, Michael Pierce, to put a sign over one of these buildings to make it look more like an administration building or a dorm. I said, 'Call it something hall. Call it Pierce Hall.' I walk away and he's setting this up and I come back and someone says, 'Hey, that's funny and I look up and there's Cyran Hall. So I let it go. But I'm a little self-conscious about it. Everyone seems to notice it.'

The director has a great respect for Roger Corman, realizing the producer will get what he wants one way or another. "Roger has a lot of respect for directors," she said, "and he

gives them complete freedom, as long as they're not insane or incompetent. He has needs as a distributor. He needs some gore, I gave him some gore. Because this was a horror film there really wasn't any need particularly for gratuitous nudity. In many cases if you're doing an erotic thriller for him, it's mandatory. Roger lets you do your thing, but if you don't give him what he needs to sell the movie, i.e. nudity, he'll go back and either tell you to shoot some later or have someone else shoot it and insert it into the movie." □

Adam Baldwin as Det. Burt Miller fights off Willie at the film's climax.





# SPACE ABOVE & BEYOND

**Area 51, the new computer graphics kids on the block, jazz-up Fox's new series.**

*By Paula Vitaris*

Rockets blasting off, planes escaping the Earth's atmosphere, asteroids spinning through the cosmos, and an explosive battle between the forces of Earth and an alien civilization: these are just some of the special effects in the pilot episode of Fox Network's *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*. To bring their tale of Earth's fight for survival to life, creators and executive producers James Wong and Glen Morgan turned to Area 51, one of the many companies that have sprung up over the past two decades in the wake of the visual effects revolution begun by *STAR WARS*. Area 51's Tim McHugh serves as *SPACE*'s visual effects producer, colleague Glenn Campbell as visual effects supervisor, and Ken Stranahan, who co-founded the company with McHugh, is digital animation supervisor.

The digital effects firm Area 51 first cooked up its computer-generated images in a kitchen. Ken Stranahan's kitchen, to be precise. Stranahan and Area 51 co-founder Tim McHugh met when they worked together on the *SEAQUEST*, *DSV* pilot, for which McHugh served as visual effects supervisor. Although McHugh departed the show after the pilot, Stranahan stayed on through *SEAQUEST*'s first year. Their paths crossed again when a mutual friend, Joe Conti, who was working with McHugh, asked if Stranahan wanted to work for them. Shortly thereafter, Conti departed and McHugh and Stranahan combined forces, naming their new business after the top se-



Tim McHugh, co-founder of Area 51 and special visual effects producer for Fox's *SPACE*, parlaying effects know-how into a high-tech graphics company.

cret government installation in Nevada that so fascinates UFO buffs.

"Tim had a computer, I had three computers, so we started out with four or five computers all together," recalled Stranahan. "I had a set-up at my house that was able to get the work done, so we moved into my kitchen and for about a year we worked out of there."

*STAR TREK*, *VIPER*, *UNSOLVED MYSTERIES*, *VR5* and other shows all called upon McHugh's and Stranahan's expertise, and their assignments became more and more involved. When Area 51 landed a shot from Clive Barker's *LORD OF ILLUSIONS*, it hired on its third employee, Richard Payne (who eventually left when a computer games company asked him to become an animation supervisor). With the *LORD OF ILLUSIONS* job in hand, McHugh and Stranahan felt their business had grown enough that the time had come

to expand into more spacious quarters than Stranahan's kitchen. They relocated Area 51 to a quiet side street in Pasadena, and upgraded their equipment with the purchase of their first Dec Alpha computers. And they added Matte Merkovich, an experienced matte painter, to their roster.

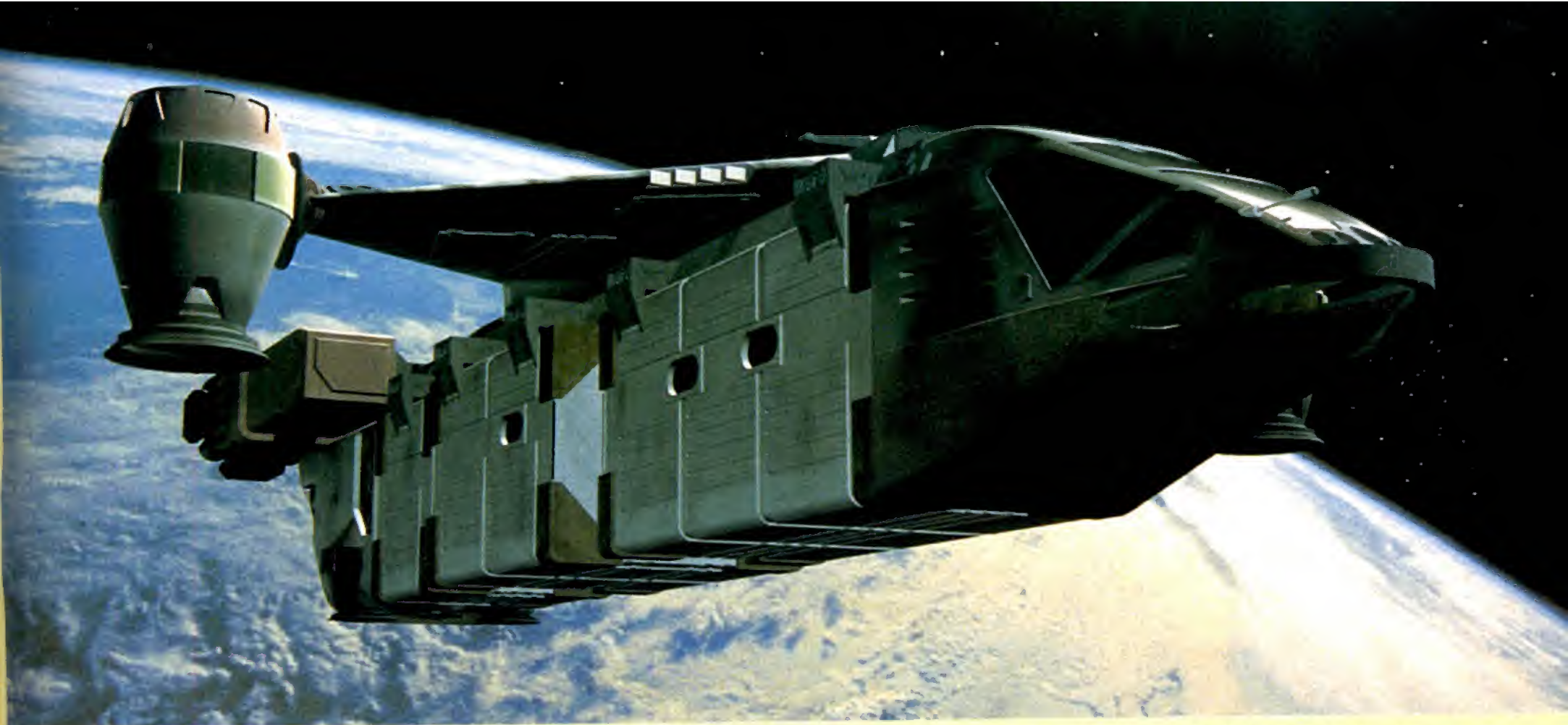
It wasn't long before Area 51 received its biggest commission yet: to create the computer-generated images for the pilot of Fox's *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, a \$6.5 million, two-hour project that called for some of the most complicated CGI shots ever to be created for television. The assignment precipitated yet another expansion,

with Area 51 taking over a second floor, and McHugh and Stranahan embarking on a country-wide search for animators. The company grew with the addition of David Jones, Scott Wheeler, Karl Denham and Lee Stranahan as computer animators and Clare Ragge as visual effects coordinator.

Another new hire was Glenn Campbell (whose name, ironically, is identical to that of a well-known UFO researcher), an old acquaintance of McHugh's. The two had met when they were both hand-picked in the late 70s to enter the first visual effects training course offered by local 659 of the cameraman's union.

"Tim and I became friends because we were cut from the same cloth, with a similar temperament and a common interest in film and effects," said Campbell. "That's important, because there are a lot of guys who got into the business simply because they saw *STAR WARS* and said, 'Ooh, special ef-





A marine transport lifts away from Earth in the two-hour pilot for *SPACE*, an example of the photo realism sought in Area 51's effects work for the show.

fects!' They have no real understanding of how individual shots relate to an entire feature film or even a sequence of events, which makes all the difference when you're designing something. You have to be able to interact with a studio or a director or any creative person and know how what they want to see will relate to the entire show. You can't just say, 'This will be a cool shot!'"

As visual effects supervisor for *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, Campbell is responsible, together with McHugh, for "the overall look of the show and sense of speed and timing." Campbell is also the Area 51 "guy on the set. I supervise the shooting of blue screen shots and the live-action plates, making sure that people don't cross matte lines or that we've got sufficient footage for our needs.

"The primary concern for the pilot was to make the visual effects shots—all computer generated—appear 'photo real.' *BABYLON 5* is very stylized," said Campbell. "It suits them, but with *SPACE*, when you see a computer-generated location, you're supposed to ask, 'Gee, where'd they film that?' The shots look like we built physical models and used traditional techniques. The physical surface, the way it reacts, is as real as we could make it. The only thing which gives it away is the fantastic nature of the object itself."

To achieve the photo real look, Area 51 employs LightWave, a 3-D animation program that Campbell said features "a very powerful modeller and a very powerful compositing and animation system. It gives you a huge variety of real-world based effects, such as lens flares, depth of field and focus and motion blur, which are very useful for emulating the real world. It's pretty remarkable."

Area 51 utilizes a variety of computers to design their CGI shots. Their most powerful machines are Dec Alphas; Pentiums, Flight Technologies PCs and Macintoshes are also used, depending on the program needed and each computer's capability.

Classic war films and World War II documentaries served as inspiration for *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND*, and Morgan and Wong wanted Area 51 to recreate the black-and-white look of these films. Morgan and Wong also drew upon what they had learned during their tenure with *THE X-FILES*, one of the most darkly lit of television shows.

"We're not afraid of black," remarked McHugh. "We can have black in this show. It can be dark, it can be shadowy. I always thought *THE X-FILES* was a very gutsy show because they allowed shadows and

darkness, and I loved that. It gives a very rich, feature look to everything."

*SPACE*, added Campbell, follows through on those lighting principles. At times the color palette becomes as close to a true black-and-white as possible. One particularly beautiful shot called for the Marine Hammerhead jets to emerge from behind an asteroid cluster and zoom by the camera, backlit by a brilliant white sun. "When the shot begins, you can't quite tell what are asteroids and what are Hammerheads," said McHugh. "So they come right out and the sun starts to glint off the wings. Except for red running lights, this is essentially a black and white shot."

The black backdrop of outer space did not make for an easy time in designing the alien ships, which were also black in color. "Black ships in space aren't exactly the

U. S. Marine fighters battle alien invaders in the asteroid belt, CGI effects by Area 51 for the \$6.5 million pilot.







Marine Hammerhead fighters emerge from behind an asteroid cluster, backlit by the sun, an Area 51 beauty shot.

world's greatest idea," laughed animator Scott Wheeler, in charge of the alien fleet. "But based on the way we light the alien ship, and the way the texture turned out, it works pretty well. We shot it from behind, so that you get a lot of bounced light from the curved surfaces into the camera. I gave the back of the ship a blue glow, so even when light wasn't hitting it, you'd have that kind of blue haze behind it that would define its pattern. And some of the surfaces have a glow so that no matter what angle you shot from, and whether it's hitting light or not, some light would accent the black. It gave it a rim light effect." The alien ship's reflective, tiled surface also helped, added Wheeler. "We ended up doing a geometric, reflective surface on the harshly angled portions, so even though they might be sloped away from the camera, there was a bevel that would cast light back."

Since ship designs begin with SPACE production designer Bernard Hides, Area 51 works closely with the art department. They begin by holding their own CGI meeting as soon as a script is received, and within a day or two meet with the art department and production staff to plan which shots should be built entirely in CGI.

At times a ship's final design will combine suggestions from both the art department and Area 51, with the Naval Space Carrier Saratoga serving as a case in point. "We constructed it based on the drawing that was sent to us," said Campbell. "Literally two weeks before we were supposed to deliver all the Saratoga shots, the art department called and said, 'You know, we've got this other version of the Saratoga that everyone thinks looks a lot better. How come you didn't use that one?' Well, it had never been sent to Area 51 as an official design. It fell through the cracks. When we saw it, we said, 'Yeah, this is a better looking design! We wish you had sent this a lot sooner!' [Animation designer] Karl Denham and all

the people here just killed themselves making a new Saratoga, modifying what they could from the old one. It was worth doing, because it was a better-looking ship and this is, for all intents and purposes, our Enterprise, our Seaquest, the home of our heroes. It's what you'll see every week and nobody wanted to sit there and cringe, going, 'Yeah, it's OK, but you should have seen the one they were going to use.'"

The basic shape and look of the Saratoga came from the art department, said Campbell, "and Karl [Denham] and Scott [Stranahan] and Ken [Wheeler] worked out how the Saratoga's doors opened and how the pod bays were structured. In some cases we incorporated ideas that Bernard wanted on how certain ships entered or dropped off cargo."

The alien ship design also came in for a few changes from Scott Wheeler, who constructed his 3-D model from a drawing sent by the art department. "There were some

**“BABYLON 5 is very stylized. Our primary concern was to make the computer-generated SPACE visual effects shots ‘photo real.’”**

**—FX supervisor Glenn Campbell—**

things they hadn't taken into consideration; for instance, what would it look like from the side? They hadn't drawn that, so I had to extrapolate it." A two dimensional drawing doesn't always translate well into three dimensions, and Wheeler ended up making some changes. "I changed the angle of the pontoons," he said. "They had them at a funny angle so when you put three on there the third one would be offset weirdly, so I made it more of a regular shape. But," he added, "overall it's pretty close to what the original drawing was."

The Area 51 animators also found themselves making suggestions for unscripted shots they felt would clarify the pilot's story. "The whole battle sequence was put together after the fact," noted Campbell. "In the initial script, they go out, the good guys shoot up a bunch of aliens in the asteroids, and we cut to the Saratoga saying, 'Good work, boys, go home,' and that was it. And everyone said, 'Well, where's the big battle? I mean, shouldn't we see the aliens getting their butt kicked?' You never got that feeling that our heroes were really in jeopardy, and any moment they could all be killed. Area 51 designed about ten shots for the end battle, storyboarded them, and [producer] Jim [Wong] said, 'Yeah, this is cool!' Jim and [coproducer] Glen [Morgan] have been very, very good about altering

The marines ice an alien invader, CGI by Area 51 rendered in Lightwave 3-D on DecAlphas, Pentiums and Macs.







Close encounters of the computer graphic kind, Area 51's outstanding work on the pilot featured texture-mapped detail to give the ships a physical reality.

shots and collaborating.”

With so much air time devoted to computer generated scenes, the Area 51 animators find they have to think like directors and editors, and have a good sense of what is best for the story. “You can’t do an effects shot and just make it look pretty in and of itself,” commented Campbell. “You have to know what cut precedes or comes after, because it has to integrate. If you just do a stand-alone shot and massage it to death, you will design a really pretty shot, but it will never cut in with the rest of the show, and then it serves no purpose.

“Disney animators will ask, ‘What’s my motivation? What’s my character doing?’ It’s the same principle when you’re doing a space ship flying around. It has to look like there’s a guy at the controls. If it’s just an object that the computer has very deftly moved from A to B, and then done a nice interpolation of arcs, it looks like a computer-generated shot. What makes something look real are the hesitations and the mistakes.

“You’ll notice that in a lot of our shots, the camera doesn’t always stay locked in. That was one of Tim’s big edicts. No slaving and targeting camera to model, so no matter where the model goes, the camera always looks at it. That’s great for the computer. In real life, when a car whizzes by on a race track, the cameraman does the best he can to keep it in frame, but he loses it, or gains on the frame, because that’s what happens in real life. And that’s what we’ve emulated here as best we can, that feeling of ‘Hey, that thing went by, and we tried to catch it.’ It’s subtle,

but again, these are things that make the shots feel less computer-generated.”

Campbell pointed to the matching CGI shot of Nathan’s plane, the *Above and Beyond*, as a particularly good example of how realistic the effects can be. “This was done by Scott Wheeler, and is an example of tying in to what the live action’s doing. The cockpit interior you see [in the CGI shots] is a faithful reproduction of the physical set. We thought, ‘We’ll never be able to hold up to this kind of scrutiny, so we’ll have to spend a lot of time and build this high resolution, eight-zillion polygon version of the ship just to do closeups.’

“The texture mapping on the plane, the bump maps, the scratches, the reflections—most people would stop there, there would be just a straight texture map that happens to have some bumps on it. Look at the specularities and the effect of the brushed metal as the camera pans around.

That’s the level of detail the ship has on it. Tim fought long and hard to have on the show the effect of brushed metal. It looks like someone *built* this. This isn’t just a texture map on top of a flat polygon. Each one of those panels has its own custom texture and elements that contribute to the illusion that it’s a physical object, with physical characteristics.”

SPACE’s audience will undoubtedly notice similarities to STAR WARS, and the Area 51 animators happily acknowledge the debt. “We took a cue from STAR WARS for our cockpit lighting,” said Campbell. “It’s hard to evoke motion when you’ve got a guy in a cockpit faking it. Relative to what’s happening to him, you bob him around. [Production designer] Bernard [Hides] built a beautiful counterbalance rig. But the thing that really helped us was that we looked at STAR WARS and said the thing that really gives a sense of motion

is a guy sitting in a cockpit, and with the sun raking from left to right about his head, and the stars going in a completely opposite direction. The effect is that he’s hauling ass through space, even though he’s just sitting in one spot. So we emulated that.”

Noted McHugh, “STAR WARS was influential because it was an action film. It wasn’t like 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, where you were just floating, looking at something majestically. STAR WARS was much more of a template to the extent that it was real action in outer space.”

Added Campbell, “George Lu-

continued on page 61

Area 51 founders McHugh and digital animation supervisor Ken Stranahan, with (l to r) David Jones, Matte Merkovich, visual effects supervisor Glenn Campbell, Clare Ragge and Scott Wheeler, special effects' next generation.





# H.R. GIGER

RetroNY & Giger's Watch Abert '93



October 30 - December 23, 1993

Alexander Gallery

### Rare Giger Posters Offered Publicly for the First Time!

These posters were only available for sale during Giger gallery exhibitions, and are offered here to the general public for the first time. **Alexander Gallery** (top), 13.5x25.5, 1993, featuring Giger's female torso, **\$14.99 plus \$3.50** for unfolded shipping and handling. And **The Psychedelic Solution** (bottom), 15.5x23.5, 1988, featuring one of Giger's most acclaimed paintings "Illuminatus I," **\$24.99 plus \$3.50** for unfolded shipping and handling. Order both posters and pay just one shipping charge. Quantities are limited!



### Free 19x21 Giger's Alien Poster With Giger Orders!

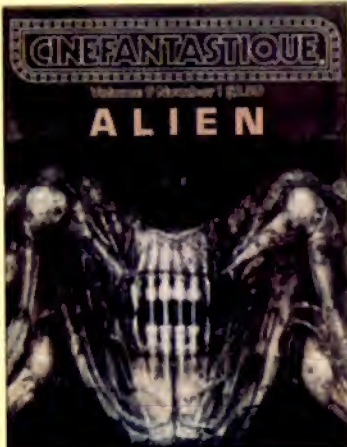
Sent unfolded in a tube with orders of Giger posters, sent folded with orders of Giger books or back issues. Enclose an **additional \$3.50 for shipping and handling** if you would like the poster sent **unfolded separately** from your books or back issues purchase. One free poster per customer.



**H.R. GIGER PSYCHEDELIC SOLUTION GALLERY**  
3300 87th ST NEW YORK CITY 2ND FLOOR  
FEB 5 1988 MAR 26

# CFQ BOOKSHOP

## BESTSELLING COLLECTIBLES



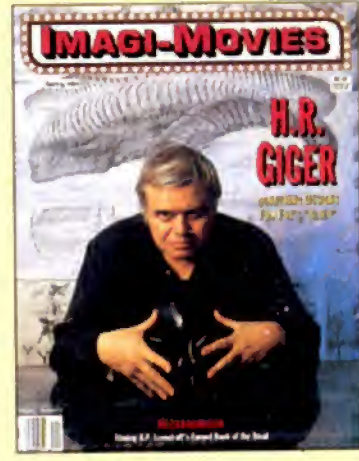
**Volume 9 Number 1**  
"Making ALIEN: Behind the Scenes," including interviews with producer Ridley Scott, artist H.R. Giger, makeup engineer, Carlo Rambaldi and producer Walter Hill; the filming of SATURN 3; reports on STAR TREK-THE MOTION PICTURE, THE BLACK HOLE and THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. **\$20.00**



**Volume 18 Number 4**  
Swiss surrealist H.R. Giger is the subject of this issue which profiles his film work since ALIEN and also takes a look at all the Giger rip-offs that have come down the pike. The artist is interviewed in his studio/home in Switzerland and speaks frankly about his past experiences and optimistically about his latest film work—THE MIRROR. **\$8.00**



**Volume 22 Number 6**  
Behind-the-scenes in the "development hell" that was the making of ALIEN 3. Reveals how hirings, firings, lawsuits and storyline indecisiveness plagued the latest installment of the saga, including an interview with H. R. Giger. Plus HELLRAISER III: HELL ON EARTH and a retrospective of Walt Disney's PETER PAN. **\$8.00**



**Imagi-Movies Vol 1 No 3**  
The original ALIEN was the only film which utilized H.R. Giger as more than a concept artist, allowing him on set to realize his designs to his own satisfaction. This is the real story behind Giger's contribution to ALIEN 3. Plus the filming of Necronomicon H. P. Lovecraft's famed book of the dead. **\$8.00**



**H. R. Giger's Biomechanics**  
With an introduction by Harlan Ellison, this magnificent volume is packed with full-color reproductions of H. R. Giger's dazzling art. It includes design sketches, articles, and the artist's fascinating personal commentaries on his life and work. Includes 22 pages of designs for POLTERGEIST II. Hardcover with foil-stamped dust jacket. **\$69.50**



**Necronomicon**  
Published by Morpheus International, with an introduction by Clive Barker, H. R. Giger presents his most powerful and evocative images in this extra large, 12"x17" hardcover volume. Filled with almost 200 paintings, sketches and photographs PLUS poster-size foldouts! Includes the artists' reflections on his work. **\$69.50**



**Necronomicon II**  
This remarkable companion volume to Giger's first amazing Necronomicon art book contains nearly 200 reproductions of paintings, sculptures and photos plus many of Giger's startling production designs for ALIEN and other film projects. Filled with autobiographical text, interviews, essays, plus an extensive bibliography. **\$69.50**



**Giger's Alien**  
In a fascinating diary, Giger traces his involvement in ALIEN from his initial conceptual sketches through to the final terrifying realization of his unique visions on screen! Giger's riveting production designs are faithfully reproduced in all their bizarre and frightening beauty. Included are designs and scenes which never appeared in the film. **\$39.95**



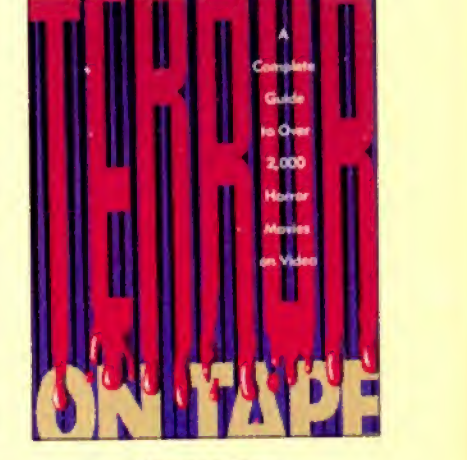
**The Book of Alien**  
The exciting behind-the-scenes story of the making of one of the most popular and influential science fiction films of all time. Packed with sketches, working photographs and interviews with key personnel such as H.R. Giger and Ridley Scott, this book by Paul Scanlon and Michael Gross provides fascinating insights. **\$20.00**



**More Gore Score**  
Straight from the pits of hell comes this devilishly gruesome new book from author Chas. Balun. He leaps straight for the jugular vein when reviewing contemporary splatter/slasher films such as DEMONIA, SILENCE OF THE LAMBS and RAMPAGE. Complete with rating system, celebrity quotes and index. **\$12.95**



**Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds**  
*The Dark Dreams of Dario Argento* by Maitland McDonagh is a look at the body of Argento's work known mainly to horror film fans since 1970. McDonagh examines the dark dreams of the auteur—filled with twisted logic, rhapsodic violence and stylized excess from their dark origins to their conceptualization on film. **\$18.95**



**Terror on Tape**  
Here is the ultimate guide to horror movies on video. Compiled by James O'Neill, this videotape review covers 2000 horror films from the past 75 years from mainstream masterpieces to cheesy exploitation flicks. This book features dozens of photos and over 100 behind-the-scenes sidebar essays. **\$16.95**

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM, SEE PAGE 61



# REVIEWS

## FILM RATINGS

- Must See
- Excellent
- Good
- Mediocre
- Poor

### EDGAR ALLAN POE'S THE BLACK CAT

Directed by "Lewis Coates." The Sci Fi Channel, 10/95, 1989 Italian with English soundtrack. 120 mins. less commercials. With: Florence Guerin, Urbano Barberini, Caroline Munro, Brett Halsey.

This 1989 Italian concoction directed by Luigi Cozzi under his "Lewis Coates" pseudonym features his 1979 STAR CRASH leading lady Caroline Munro. Cozzi also wrote this mish-mash which has nothing at all to do with Poe, merely occasionally cutting to a closeup of a cat which is not otherwise integrated into the plot. Cozzi also has the effrontery to not only mine the same vein as Dario Argento's SUSPIRIA, being about one of the Three Witch Mothers (this one called Levana) but also to casually mention Argento's film, while noting the Thomas DeQuincy source novel left plenty of material to use!

A director Urbano Barberini and a writer have drafted a four-page outline about the world's most evil witch, Levana, to star the director's wife (Florence Guerin), much to the chagrin of the writer's wife (Caroline Munro) who covets this juicy role. A producer (Brett Halsey) decides to fund the effort, but meantime Guerin starts having nightmares about being possessed not only by Levana but also by a fairy with a crystal ball. A lot of Guerin's major appliances explode, shooting out blood and entrails, one wall of her house is demolished by a car crash, and virtually the entire cast is killed, but each of these sequences turns out either to be part of a film being shot by a totally separate director or a dream of Guerin's. This kind of repetitive trickery gets old really fast. The Levana makeup is some of the worst I've ever seen—basically a slit mask of gooey lumps superimposed with occasional shots of maggots.

Most of the cast is Italian but everyone's lips move to English dialogue; and the occasional shots of writing on the wall or in scripts is all in English. However, everyone, including Caroline Munro and Brett Halsey, are dubbed in that peculiar echo-chamber way of foreign horror films which I have not heard in years. Perhaps to make up for the lack of ambient background noise, the musical score is a particularly annoying series of percussive interludes mixed with rhythmic chanting. The special effects are mostly a series of glows and make the film seem more dated than you'd expect.

● Judith P. Harris

### A BUCKET OF BLOOD

Directed by Michael James McDonald. Showtime, 9/95, 83 mins. With: Anthony Michael Hall, Justine Bateman, Sam Lloyd, Alan Sues.

Roger Corman rolls snake eyes in this remake of one of his seminal comedy works. Someone forgot to tell the authors of this new version, Brendan Broderick and director Michael James McDonald, this was a comedy. The only comedic touches to be found this go-round are in the performances of the untalented artists at the JabberJaw cafe, but the killings themselves, and the plot in general, are not at all funny.

Anthony Michael Hall was once a geeky little kid, but has since beefed up considerably and is woefully miscast as the woebegone Walter Paisley. This role is so identified with Dick Miller, he has subsequently played characters of this name in other people's films.



Cutting her own throat, Caroline Munro stars for director Luigi Cozzi in 1989's EDGAR ALLAN POE'S THE BLACK CAT, now surfacing on cable TV.

Miller may not be the world's best actor, but in the Walter Paisley role, he acts rings around Hall, who comes off as feeble-minded, generating none of the sympathy Miller elicited in the 1959 original.

Shadoc Stevens plays another of his pretentious, snooty, opinionated, shallow characters this time with long hair in a ponytail. I take back everything I ever said about glasses being an insufficient disguise for SUPERMAN; I did not recognize Justine Bateman as the love interest, although virtually her only disguise was a pair of glasses and a foreign accent. Alan Sues, once so chubby and big-boned on LAUGH IN, now appears at death's door in a minor role as a rich collector of Hall's obviously junky "statues."

● Judith P. Harris

### DEAD WEEKEND

Directed by Amos Poe. Showtime, 10/95, 81 mins. With: Stephen Baldwin, David Rasche, Nicholas Worth, Tom Kenny.

DEAD WEEKEND is virtually the same plot as AMANDA AND THE ALIEN (shown 2 months previously on the same cable network), about a creature from another planet who swaps bodies after having sex with a human. There is no plot per se, so aside from the comparatively subdued nudity, there is not much difference between this and a porno film.

○ Judith P. Harris

### DIGITAL MAN

Directed by Phillip Roth. Republic Pictures Home Video, 9/95. With: Ken Olanoff, Kristen Dalton, Adam Baldwin, Ed Lauter, Paul Gleason, Matthias Hues.

Like many of its brethren, HOLOGRAM MAN, SHADOWCHASER, 1-3, NEMESIS, AUTOMATIC, etc. DIGITAL MAN rehashes the well-worn sci-fi premise of the automaton, the artificial man. This time around it's an untested military prototype known as D-1 (not to be confused with T-2 of course). D-1 is dispatched when terrorists try to blackmail the world. He quickly eliminates them but seems to operate under his own program, perhaps posing a greater threat than the terrorists. An elite team, some of whom may be cyborgs themselves, are sent to stop him. A government intrigue subplot to explain D-1's actions and provide an opportunity for semi-names Gleason, Baldwin and Lauter to make pointless cameos, was quickly filmed on a single set. Otherwise almost the entire film takes place on inexpensive outdoor locations.

There are several production gaffs that smack of a hurried and troubled production, such as when Baldwin's character is referred to as a lieutenant, and then barely three lines later, is called Captain. The presence of an uncredited Amanda Wyss and a barely

glimpsed Susan Tyrell, also hint at un-filmed, or unusable, sequences.

The film manages some nice touches of humor, notably Don Swayze's redneck idiot, and a surprise ending involving Lauter and Tyrell's characters. There's a nice mock-Morricone score for the scenes of D-1 tearing up a small western town. Green communications, who also produced the film, manage some impressive, if inconsistent, CGI effects, introducing D-1, portrayed by the all-too-human Hues, sporting his usual Germanic accent. The directorial approach seems to have been "when in doubt, blow something up." To be sure, there are a myriad of fine explosions to be found here. But not much else.

● John Thonen

### HELLFIRE

Directed by David Tavsk. Showtime, 9/95, 97mins. With: Ben Cross, Jennifer Burns, Beverly Garland, Doug Wert.

HELLFIRE, is an ill-conceived snorer about a dead composer possessing a live one (Ben Cross), commissioned to complete his unfinished symphony. Toward the end of their hey day, even Hammer was unable to pull off a good costume drama, so it would be amazing if Roger Corman had managed it—he has not.

Despite the input of three credited writers, there's not much plot, but there are endless scenes of Cross, Burns and Garland miming piano-playing while some pretentious cacophony repeats on the soundtrack.

There's a sort of JACK THE RIPPER subplot as the unfinished symphony repeatedly transports Cross to the same tavern where he kills prostitutes with piano wire. There's also a number of fire stunts, one of which seems simultaneously dangerous and ludicrous, as the reincarnated composer simultaneously burns and plays the piano, in an apparent attempt to prevent his return to the realms of the undead. It's heartening to see Beverly Garland appear in yet another Corman opus (their working relationship spans some 40 years), but sadly there's hardly anything for her to do in this.

○ Judith P. Harris

### THE HOUSE THAT MARY BOUGHT

Directed by Simon MacCorkindale. Showtime, 10/95, 101 mins. With Susan George, Ben Cross, Maurice Thorogood, Vernon Dobtcheff.

Betraying its literary origins (it's based on a novel called *Odd's End*), THE HOUSE THAT MARY BOUGHT is talky and slow. Mary (Susan George) and Malcolm (Ben Cross) live in rural France in an isolated mansion. Odd things happen—a gourmet meal no one admits to preparing, fruit appearing and disappearing, nasty forged letters written on envelopes from Mary's drawer. Mary thinks it's a ghost, but no one believes her because she was once treated for depression after the death of her young child. Is Mary trying to drive Malcolm insane? Is Malcolm trying to drive Mary insane? As played by George and Cross, both are so insufferably rich and happy, it's impossible to care. Viewers who saw HIDER IN THE HOUSE (1990) will have an inkling what's going on, in case of the failure of the heavy-handed symbolism of the hermit crab, who lives in the shells of other sea creatures and is willing to kill them to get it.

Directed in an uninspired fashion by ex-MANIMAL star and husband of George, Simon MacCorkindale.

○ Judith P. Harris

### WES CRAVEN PRESENTS MIND RIPPER

Directed by Joe Gayton. HBO, 10/95, 95 mins. With: Adam Solomon, John Apicella, Peter Shepherd, Claire Stansfield.

MIND RIPPER is one of the 10 most boring films



I've seen in the last 30 years. There is not an original idea in it, and it's quite a chore to sit through. A scientist (Lance Henriksen) invents a regeneration virus and tests it on a dying man (Dan Blom). A fellow scientist, (John Diehl) boosts the dose and turns the guinea pig into an unstoppable killing machine. When the creature gets loose in an underground installation, he kills off the cast one by one. Where have we seen this before?

The special makeup effects by Image Animation are not bad, but there is so little suspense or jeopardy involved, it seems more amusing than frightening to see the creature's penis-like claw (which grows out of his tongue) get cut off by the good guys. This is a film where you feel real sorry for the cast.

o Judith P. Harris

## NEMESIS 2

Directed by Albert Pyun. Imperial Home Video. 9/95. With: Sue Price, Tina Colt, Terri White.

Like most of director Albert Pyun's films, his surprise '93 hit NEMESIS had scant character development, minimal plot and somnambulant acting. Still, it delivered the action in the kinetic style Pyun excels in, and managed to be a better cinematic depiction of cyberpunk sensibilities than the far larger budgeted JOHNNY MNEMONIC. It also managed a successful theatrical run and a very successful turn in the video stores. Hence, NEMESIS 2.

N2, as the video box proclaims, opens with a lengthy and incomprehensible narrated sequence that bounces through time, space and unknown characters. When Pyun finally offers some tangible footing on which to build a story, we find that all connection to the first film has been discarded to tell the story of a time traveler who escaped the apocalyptic future with her infant child. The woman dies, but the child is adopted into the African tribe that finds her. Years later a murderous mechanical assassin, Nebula, comes through time in order to stop her from one day becoming mankind's savior. I think. It's kind of hard to be certain of anything here. The remainder of the film is a series of pursuits, escapes and confrontations between the two antagonists that, for reasons unknown, take place in the midst of civil war-torn Africa. It all moves quickly, but without ever really making sense and with an almost total disdain for the time-honored traditions of plot, characters or audience involvement.

Newcomer Sue Price is undeniably physically impressive as Alex, the child from the future, now a powerful warrior-type. There is a certain novelty, and perhaps legitimacy, to Pyun's offering of a muscle-bound female hero rather than the requisite testosterone-driven male protagonists, but it's all for naught. Perhaps Pyun was experimenting with minimalist film language techniques. As an experiment, that's fine. As entertainment, it leaves much to be desired.

o John Thonen

## PIRANHA

Directed by Scott Levy. Showtime. 9/95. 90 mins. With: Alexandra Paul, William Katt, Darleen Carr, Soleil Moon Frye.

From the scriptwriter of the dreadful ALIEN WITHIN comes a new contender for the worst of the ROGER CORMAN PRESENTS made-for-cable films: PIRANHA. I was not that much of a fan of the 1978 original John Sayles/Joe Dante collaboration, except for its quirky, briefly seen stop motion animation, but this remake is so deficient in everything, it makes the original look like a masterpiece. The underwater sequences and quick cuts of the mutant fish are almost identical to the original film, but with the addition of chattering teeth added to the soundtrack, which sounds like some kind of novelty store windup toy and would be more suited to a comedy. There is absolutely no sense of urgency to the plot in which



The crew of SPACE (l to r) Joe de la Fuente, Morgan Weisser, Kristen Cloke, Rodney Rowland and Lanel Chapman, fleshing out the stereotypes.

William Katt and Alexandra Paul take a leisurely ride on a raft in order to warn civilization, including Katt's daughter, of the unkillable, mutant piranha in the local water.

o Judith P. Harris

## SAVAGE HARVEST

Directed by Eric Stanze. Salt City Home Video. 9/95. 71 mins. With: Lisa Morrison, Ramona Midgett, William Clifton.

Very poor and amateurish video release, made in 1993 in Missouri. There is virtually nothing remotely entertaining or interesting about this badly acted and directed, almost plotless picture, which serves mostly as a showcase for a series of mediocre gore effects. Early in the film there is a long and boring expository sequence, and after that the narrative is nothing more than: a group of young people visit a farm for the weekend, and become possessed by ancient Indian demons; the possessed ones kill and eat the live people, the live people shotgun, stab, and dismember their possessed companions, and so forth, until there is only one person remaining. Watching the "making of" featurette at the end of the film the viewer might wonder, "What film are they talking about?" since it is impossible to connect the director's boasts with the excruciatingly bad and boring footage that has just ended.

o David Wilt

## SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND

Airs weekly on Fox. 60 mins. With: Morgan Weisser, Kristen Cloke, Rodney Rowland.

Credit SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND not for what it possesses, but for what it's missing. There's no technobabble. No bombastic philosophical discussions. No vague references to past continuity (at least not yet). In other words, it isn't STAR TREK. For that, the series should be applauded; TREK's science-fiction monopoly on TV has long needed to be overthrown. It's just too bad they didn't assign more engaging troops to stage the coup.

Created by X-FILES veterans James Wong and Glen Morgan, SPACE is no talkathon; it aims for the jugular. Although the interstellar dogfights recall STAR WARS, SPACE ventures into the unflinchingly brutal high tech conflicts James Cameron envisioned in ALIENS and the TERMINATOR movies. This isn't a show for sissies. Scowling marines march across otherworldly landscapes brandishing gargantuan weaponry even comic book legend Jack Kirby couldn't have imagined, battling equally fearsome extraterrestrials and homicidal androids.

However, someone neglected to arm them with personalities; instead, they loaded them with tragedies. The characters in SPACE read like a roll call of life's mishaps: Nathan West (Morgan Weisser), separated from his lover, who's presumed dead; Shane Hasten

(Kristen Cloke), her parents slain by machines when she was a child; and Cooper Hawkes (Rodney Rowland), a perpetual target of racist ire. SPACE may still be the final frontier, but it's been explored too often to evoke any surprises. SPACE needs more such irreverence to traverse above and beyond what we've already seen.

o Michael Sutton

## STAR QUEST

Directed by Rick Jacobsen. New Horizons Home Video. 10/95. With: Steven Bauer, Emma Samms, Brenda Bakke, Alan Rachins, Cliff De Young.

While sporting one of the best casts ever assembled for a post-AIP Roger Corman production, this manages only to register as an unimaginative bore-fest of the highest calibre. Once more, Corman cannibalizes scenes from 1980's BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS to supply the effects sequences that bridge the endless talk comprising most of the footage.

The premise is that a team of deep-space explorers awaken from hibernation to find that nuclear war (stock footage that was getting old in the '50s) has devastated Earth. As if that wasn't bad enough, someone on board is also killing them off, one by one. TEN LITTLE INDIANS in space has been tried before (MURDER IN SPACE), but it might have worked again if any attempt at suspense had been made. Instead, the film is padded with sequences where the crew members individually try out a virtual reality system—like we haven't had enough of this on STAR TREK's holodeck. This allows for some more of Corman's favorite stock footage as well as some pretty extraneous, but undoubtedly requisite, nudity.

Most of the cast give solid performances, seemingly unaware of what a turkey they are trapped in. If you're still awake by the film's resolution you'll be treated to a very lame rehash of "surprise" endings from such non-classics of the '60s as CHOSEN SURVIVORS and THE DOOMSDAY MACHINE, which weren't exactly new twists 30 years ago. A waste of time for all concerned, particularly the viewer.

o John Thonen

## STREET FIGHTER II: THE ANIMATED MOVIE

Directed by Gisaburo Sugii. Renegade. 1/96. 96 mins. "Mature Audience" version screened. Featuring the voices of: Hank Smith, Ted Richards, Mary Briscoe.

From the plot-optional school of tie-in filmmaking comes this action-packed but intellect-bankrupt anime feature. Bad-guy Bison wants to bulk up his crime organization with martial artists, and sends robot drones around the world to spy on fisticuffs and kidnap the victors. That's about all the storyline you get in a film that fails to deliver on a coherent scenario but does its best to drag in as many characters from the popular video game as possible (most gratuitous: an arena showdown in Vegas, where throngs of hooting—and largely male—spectators may make you wonder about your own fascination with action filmmaking). Though some of the site-themed battles do stand out (my favorites: a noir-tinged New York clash and a mysticism-laced fight in India), without an ultimate goal for Bison and his baddies to aim for—a government to be toppled, a military base to be raided, a friggin' bank heist fer crissakes—the whole thing collapses into a numbing sameness. By the end, you may be forgiven for wondering who all these testosterone-charged no-necks are.

Cheesy subliminal advertising technique of the month: the way STREET FIGHTER's artists repeatedly sneak game manufacturer Capcom's name into the background. I caught a flash of a truck side-panel and a license plate. See how many you find!

o Dan Persons



# CFQ BOOKSHOP MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

## Order by Mail

Check items below or list items desired on a separate sheet of paper. Mail to: **Cinefantastique, P.O. Box 270, Oak Park, IL 60303.** Credit card orders (Visa and Mastercard only) should include signature, card number and expiration date. Make checks payable to CINEFANTASTIQUE. Foreign orders: please pay by credit card or international postal money order only (US funds). **Note: Refunds or exchanges are given for damaged merchandise only. No refunds are given for subscriptions.**

## Shipping Information

All items are shipped US Mail. Please allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery. Items are not necessarily shipped together.

## Shipping Charges

No charge for back issues or magazine subscriptions. Add per item: For books \$1.50 (US), \$3.00 (Canada/Foreign). \$3.00 for binders, and \$1.00 for T-shirts. **Note: ILL. residents add 7.75% sales tax to all but magazine orders.**

## FEMME FATALES SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 8 issues (US).....\$34.00
- 8 issues Can/Foreign.....\$39.00
- 16 issues (US).....\$65.00
- 16 issues Can/Foreign.....\$75.00

I am a new subscriber or a subscriber renewing for 16 issues. Send me the Julie Strain photo free.



## CFQ BINDER

Keep your copies of *Cinefantastique* in mint condition with this custom binder covered in luxurious sturdy sky-blue vinyl for years of use. Each binder comes with our unique design silk-screened on the cover and spine. Magazines are held in place with twelve wires for easy non-marring insertion and removal. **\$9.95**

- ### FEMME FATALES BACK ISSUES
- Vol 3 No 2.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 3 No 3.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 3 No 4.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 4 No 1.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 4 No 2.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 4 No 3.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 4 No 4.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 4 No 5.....\$ 8.00
  - Vol 4 No 6.....\$ 8.00

## CINEFANTASTIQUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 12 issues (US).....\$ 48.00
- 12 issues Canada/Foreign.....\$ 55.00



## CFQ T-SHIRT

This is the original, attention-grabbing bestseller! Made from a quality cotton-polyester blend and silk-screened in brilliant long-lasting white on jet black, this collector's T-shirt is an original CFQ design not available anywhere else. Be sure to order yours today. Please indicate size—small, medium, large and X-large. **\$9.00**

- 18 issues (US).....\$ 69.00
- 18 issues Canada/Foreign...\$ 80.00
- 24 issues (US).....\$ 90.00
- 24 issues Canada/Foreign...\$100.00

I am a new subscriber. Send me the CFQ back issues I have checked free. (One back issue for 12 months or more—Two back issues for 24 months)

## CINEFANTASTIQUE BACK ISSUES

- Vol 12 No 5/6..... Free.....\$13.00
- Vol 14 No 4/5..... Free.....\$13.00
- Vol 15 No 3..... Free.....\$ 8.00
- Vol 16 No 1..... Free.....\$ 8.00



## FF BINDER

Covered in saucy hot pink vinyl with the *Femme Fatales* logo silk-screened on the front and spine, our sturdy binder is guaranteed to keep your copies of *Femme Fatales* in mint condition for your enjoyment year after year. Magazines are held in place with twelve wires for easy non-marring insertion and removal. **\$9.95**

- Vol 16 No 2..... Free.....\$ 8.00
- Vol 16 No 4/5..... Free.....\$13.00
- Vol 18 No 2/3..... Free.....\$13.00
- Vol 20 No 1/2..... Free.....\$20.00
- Vol 24 No 2..... Free.....\$ 8.00
- Vol 24 No 3/4..... Free.....\$14.00

## COLLECTIBLES (page 63)

- Book of Alien.....\$20.00
- Broken Mirrors.....\$18.95
- CFQ Vol 19 No 1.....\$20.00
- CFQ Vol 18 No 4.....\$ 8.00
- CFQ Vol 22 No 6.....\$ 8.00
- Giger's Alien.....\$39.95
- Giger's Biomechanics.....\$69.50
- Imagi-Movies Vol 1 No 3.....\$ 8.00
- More Gore Score.....\$12.95

- Necronomicon.....\$69.50
- Necronomicon II.....\$69.50
- Terror on Tape.....\$16.95

## GIGER POSTERS

- Alexander Gallery.....\$14.99plus \$3.50 s&h
- The Psychedelic Solution.....\$14.99plus \$3.50 s&h

Order both posters and pay only one shipping charge of \$3.50

- I have ordered Giger merchandise other than the posters and I am including an additional \$3.50 for unfolded shipping of my free Giger's Alien poster.

## LOGO ITEMS

- The CFQ T-Shirt.....\$ 9.00
  - Small  Med  Large
  - X-Large
- The CFQ Binder.....\$ 9.95
- 3 Binder Special.....\$25.95
- The FF Binder.....\$ 9.95
- 3 Binder Special.....\$25.95

## Order by Phone



Visa Mastercard Dial:

**1-800-798-6515**

Please use the number above for placing orders only. All customer service inquiries should be directed to (708) 366-5566.

## ALIEN RIDE

continued from page 15

was okayed, a videotape of it was sent to Iwerks where a technician programmed a movable hydraulic chair (similar to what the audience will ride) to match the bumps in the move.

The lighting started off murky and mysterious—with rays of light casting spectacular patterns from the ceilings above. The roofs consisted of forklift crates. But producers decided they wanted it brighter so riders could better see and anticipate what's coming ahead. Top lighting had to be kept to a minimum since the ceiling removals would've changed the lighting during the shot. Therefore, side lighting and ambient lights inside the set were chosen. Even a small fluorescent was mounted on the camera below the Dedo searchlight to provide some visibility up close.

At one point in the middle of the first seven-hour take, a can of Coke fell into the set right in front of the lens. Unfortunately, the shutter had been in the open position and the take had to start over. The ultra-slow moves enabled the grips to remove the ceiling tops with relative ease, yet created extra-long working hours for all concerned. This was especially unfor-

tunate when the room had to maintain an accurate smoke level in order to simulate a hazy atmosphere for the miniature. Crewmembers were forced to breathe this obnoxious oil for hours.

The Aliens were played by actors in suits. The costumes and heads were fabricated from expensive store-bought items. The Alien Queen designed by Fizel was about two-feet-high and animated via rod puppets. Shots of Aliens from the theatrical film were freely intercut using an Adobe Premiere non-linear editing machine.

ALIENS was licensed by Iwerks from 20th Century-Fox Licensing. In addition to creating a simulation ride based on the movie, ALIENS will become the first motion picture to be developed into an interactive virtual reality attraction. Iwerks Virtual Adventures will debut the new "Aliens" attraction later this year.

Filming began in February '95. Due to the tight budget, the entire production was kept under wraps as the filmmakers did not want outside influences. Alien designer H.R. Giger noted, when he heard about the project, "It's good that they're doing it, but I would like to be informed." Maybe he'll ride it someday and actually live the terror of his creation.

## SPACE EFFECTS

continued from page 57

cas set the pattern. You can go beyond it, which hopefully we've done, but what do people refer to? Lucas used World War II footage as his template. He took the old stuff and cut together black-and-white footage of WWII movies and made his dogfight happen, and replaced it with space ships. We've done essentially the same thing for the same reason. That's what Jim [Wong] and Glen [Morgan] started with, not using STAR WARS as a template, but the same WWII movies that inspired Lucas. So by default, we're in the same universe that Lucas already blazed a path on, but we're there for the same reason: it's 'Let's get that leathernecks-in-space feeling.'"

The extensive CGI in SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND makes for some long days and nights for the Area 51 animators, but Tim McHugh feels the time couldn't be more rewarding. "It's the most collaborative team I've ever worked on and the best TV experience I've had," he enthused. "The previous shows we worked on were never anywhere near this open, or so willing to try things and experiment. We've got a much richer show for it."

## SPECIES DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

continued from page 34

workers at Boss, three key men guided Edlund through the digital realm: visual effects co-supervisor Jim Rygiel (THE LAST STAR-FIGHTER); Andre Bustanoby, who created the mechanical aspects of the puppet; and Jeff Platt, a brilliant electronics supervisor who is also head of R & D at Boss.

Boss is developing a remote version of motion control. Past computer-driven, motion-control shots required mammoth precision equipment tied to a multitude of umbilical cables attached to pulse-driven stepper motors. The system, lovingly called "The Boom-a-saurus," was repeatable, though big and clumsy. A new breakthrough using light-emitting diodes to feed distances into the computer may work in conjunction with this mechanical beast.

Boss' next big production is Harold Ramis' MULTIPLICITY, with Michael Keaton as a working man who clones himself to ease his workload, until the clones start doing the same thing. Boss will use similar real-time digital techniques to create on-set composites with traveling split screens to aid Keaton in interacting with as many as four of his clones in one shot.



# LETTERS

## IN DEFENSE OF DALTON

I was disheartened to see so-called Bond expert Stephen Jay Rubin [27:3:20]...trashing Timothy Dalton in your GOLDENEYE issue. ...When Rubin judges Dalton to be "bland," he simply goes too far. After 12 years of Roger Moore's dapper but lighthearted routine, Dalton presented a darker, emotional ferocity many of us found quite refreshing. Suddenly James Bond was no longer the cartoon character Moore had developed, but a complex, intense and believable personality. There's plenty of humor to be had in Dalton's movies; only most of it is of the dry and ironic sort. Bland? Far from it!

And, let's not forget that Dalton's achievement has been saluted by many critics, Leonard Maltin and *Newsweek* included (Maltin ranks LICENCE TO KILL as "one of the best since Connery left the series"). Not to mention the President of the James Bond Fan Club, as recorded in A & E's BIOGRAPHY OF IAN FLEMING. Brosnan, pleasant but forgettable in NOMADS and THE LAWNMOWER MAN, hasn't had half the career Dalton has, and isn't half the actor. Picture him pulling off the edgy, dangerous Bond of the ingenious plotting of LICENCE TO KILL and THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS, as Dalton did. I can't either. But in an age where "talents" like Kevin Costner and Demi Moore are among the most successful in film history, I'm certain Brosnan will do just fine.

Steve Lehti  
Ft. Collins, CO 80526

## GIGER SPEAKS

Richard Edlund's comments about the nature of my [SPECIES] criticisms [see page 27] require an answer. I have never said bad things about good work. His statement, that I always change my mind later, and criticize work I liked before, is far from true. In fact, quite the opposite happened, the only times I did change my mind. After ALIEN I was disappointed that all the alien landscape was edited out, but I liked the film nonetheless and love it to this day.

When ALIENS came out I questioned the change in tone and pacing from the original. It was an unexpected surprise to me, as it was for everyone. When I was able to put aside my personal disappointment in not having been asked to work on it, I soon realized

that it was the change from the first film which made it an excellent and original movie, not another predictable sequel. It is a movie I've enjoyed more and more with every viewing and consider it among the best action films ever made. And when I heard that James Cameron himself designed the Alien Queen I was even more impressed by the talents of this versatile director.

Regarding POLTERGEIST II, if the truth must be told, by the time I visited Los Angeles to check the progress of the visual effects, it was too late to really change anything. I saw everyone working very hard and doing their best and realized that I could only hurt their feelings and morale by criticizing, but nothing would be changed. I decided that it would be best to just smile and say "very good," to everything I was shown. Anyone can read in my book, *Biomechanics*, that I reserved most of the criticism for my own mistakes on POLTERGEIST II, and that I liked almost all the executions of my designs, which did make it to the screen, with the exception of the Big Beast.

As for ALIEN<sup>3</sup>, I probably liked the dark quality of the film more than most people, and said so when others were still attacking it. My biggest complaint was about the working relationship with Messrs. Woodruff and Gillis, the way my work was referred to as "welcome suggestions" and then my designs were mostly ignored. I feel that I was used and betrayed by them, also by the director and the studio. They prevented me from receiving proper recognition for my contributions to the film's visual effects by first "forgetting" my screen credit and then withholding my name from the Academy Award nominations. In spite of the fact that I was treated very poorly I still liked the film, except a few technical details, and said so clearly, even in the big *Cinefantastique* article.

The Edlund comment which I object to most is the statement that I characteristically, "rain dislike on people who attempt to interpret my work on the screen." I "rain" on the work only when I don't like the quality of it. I can only say what I feel. I realize in Hollywood this can be a problem. The people who chose to work with me anyway seem to accept this as a worthwhile and calculated risk. Further-

more, I have never had a bad word to say about the work of Ridley Scott, only admiration and praise for everything he has created.

I have said it before, but let me say it again, I realize that, like me, Richard Edlund was only a hired person and without enough time or money, had to deliver what was probably requested of him; an ugly computer monster. Which he did. I am sorry, but I do not like her and said so the first time I saw her. Also, to my eye, the computers which were going to make her transparent, did not. However, Edlund, as the Visual Effects Supervisor, deserves all the credit for the wise decision to hire Steve Johnson's XFX, whose Sil, and other work on the film, I like very much. Boss Film Studios also did an excellent job with the morphing of Sil's eye, the underwater nightmare scenes and with the way they filmed my Ghost Train. I have both praised and found fault with the work in SPECIES and made my opinions known even before the movie came out.

Happily, people like the film anyway and care little about my humble opinion. Fortunately, this allows me the freedom to review the film and my role in it, just as many others have done. The strongest criticism, as you can read in the book *Species Design*, as always, I have reserved for my own work.

H.R. Giger  
Zurich, Switzerland

## 3-D FAN SEES ONLY RED

I was happy to see Diana J. Zemnick's retrospective on the making of CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON in issue [27:3:46], but I have to correct her on one point. The film was released in dual projector polarized 3-D, as were the great majority of all 3-D movies whether color or black and white. The red/green anaglyph system has rarely been used for features, with the notable exception of THE MASK, the more recent FREDDY'S DEAD, and a few adult films.

The confusion comes from the fact that Universal made up red/green anaglyph prints of CREATURE and IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE for a double-feature reissue in 1972. These prints are very inferior to the originals, but are easier for exhibitors to deal with since all that is required for projection are the red/green glasses. These prints still turn up in revival houses

and on college campuses from time to time. The studio even released Super 8 digest versions in the late '70s, and a 3-D videocassette in 1980. There have also been some terribly poor television versions of the classic 3-D films shown in red/green anaglyph, but listen up, I'm only gonna say this once: *95% of all 3-D movies were released theatrically in polarized format!!!* It amazes me that there is so much misinformation out there.

Also, REVENGE OF THE CREATURE was shot in 3-D, but most theatres ran the flat print.

Steve Phillips  
Las Vegas, NV 89103

## CORRECTIONS

I enjoyed your coverage of GOLDENEYE. However, in your article on Bond villains, the picture you used for Alan Cumming is actually of German actor Gottfried John who played General Ooruv. Speaking of Mr. John, a veteran of many Rainer Werner Fassbinder films, it's too bad you couldn't have interviewed him as well. He carries the weight of villainy through the main body of the movie in contrast to Cumming who bookends the film and whose techno-weenie character is more comic relief than ominous menace.

Herb Lichtenstein  
Chicago, IL

[In] your January [STAR TREK VOYAGER] issue [27:4/5:95]. The credits for the STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE episode "The Abandoned" should read "Written by D. Thomas Maio and Steve Warnek," not "Thomas E. Maio and Steve Warnek," as printed.

D. Thomas Maio  
Wayne, NJ 07470

The review of GALAXIS in our January issue [27:4/5:123], although credited to David Wilt, was written by Steven Sawicki. We regret our error.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

Reach 100,000 avid horror, fantasy and science fiction fans with your ad in *Cinefantastique*. Classified ads in this space are \$.75 per word; caps \$.25 extra per word, bold caps \$.50 extra per word. Display space is available at \$60.00 per column inch for camera-ready ads. All ads are payable in advance. Send your insertions to CFQ, P.O. Box 270, Oak Park, IL 60303.

Rent rare, independent, cult, and adult films by mail. Send \$1.00 for catalog. We also buy films, send your list. IVC 432 North Highland Avenue #13, Plymouth, WI 53073.

BACK ISSUES. Lowest prices. *Cinefantastique*, Starlog, Fangoria, Omni & movie memorabilia. Price list: Merritt, 3861 Mentone Ave. #33, Culver City, CA 90232.



# 3 OWN YOUR FAVORITE MOVIES ON LASERDISC. \$1 FOR 1 EA.

## PLUS 1 MORE AT GREAT SAVINGS!

\* Letterbox

See Details Below.

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight                   | *1372200 |
| Clear and Present Danger                             | *1326305 |
| Ace Ventura: Pet Detective                           | *1242908 |
| Grumpy Old Men                                       | *1251503 |
| Batman (1989)  | *0642504 |
| Unforgiven (1992)                                    | *1084003 |
| Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves                        | *0976803 |
| The Client   | *1300409 |
| Carlito's Way  | *1229301 |
| Basic Instinct                                       | *1033208 |
| The Abyss  | *0881102 |
| The Fugitive   | *1197706 |
| Close Encounters Of The Third Kind (Special Edition) | *1273002 |



FORREST GUMP  
1333202\*



JURASSIC PARK  
1264001\*



BATMAN FOREVER  
1432509\*



STAR WARS (THX)  
1416007\*



STAR TREK GENERATIONS  
1382803\*



CASPER (THE MOVIE)  
1427905\*

### CLUB FAVORITES

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Legends Of The Fall              | *1371301 |
| Interview With The Vampire       | *1364405 |
| Immortal Beloved                 | *1372309 |
| The Shawshank Redemption         | *1345503 |
| Stargate                         | *1334903 |
| True Lies                        | *1327105 |
| Terminator 2: Judgment Day       | *0233205 |
| Outbreak                         | *1389501 |
| Speed                            | *1297407 |
| Bladerunner (The Director's Cut) | *1097906 |
| Boys On The Side                 | *1386309 |
| Rob Roy                          | *1423201 |

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Disclosure         | *1371004 |
| Nell               | *1382100 |
| Blown Away         | *1291301 |
| The Pelican Brief  | *1251305 |
| The Sound Of Music | *0003905 |
| The Wizard Of Oz   | 0001404  |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Return of the Jedi (THX)               | *1415900 |
| The Empire Strikes Back (THX)          | *1415801 |
| Patriot Games                          | *1051309 |
| Wolf                                   | *1314905 |
| The Professional                       | *1364801 |
| Home Alone 2: Lost In New York         | *1104900 |
| Circle Of Friends                      | *1381102 |
| The Prince Of Tides                    | *0847103 |
| Jaws                                   | *0844605 |
| Star Trek I: The Motion Picture        | *0203505 |
| Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan        | *0201301 |
| Star Trek III: The Search For Spock    | *0201608 |
| Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country | *1001007 |
| Predator                               | *0364901 |
| Backdraft                              | *0559005 |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| The Last Of The Mohicans (1992)          | *1071406 |
| The Hunt For Red October                 | *0825000 |
| The Specialist                           | *1341700 |
| Maverick                                 | *1297209 |
| Dragonslayer (Remastered)                | *1352103 |
| Darkman                                  | *1375609 |
| Darkman II: The Return Of Durant         | *1372101 |
| A Few Good Men                           | *1106301 |
| Sleepless In Seattle                     | *1154905 |
| Ghost                                    | *0826008 |
| Philadelphia                             | *1251404 |
| Demolition Man                           | *1199306 |
| The Piano                                | *1237809 |
| Cliffhanger                              | *1149301 |
| Ren And Stimpy: The Essential Collection | *1411206 |

|                                     |          |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Pink Floyd: The Wall                | *1293802 |
| E.T.:                               |          |
| The Extra-Terrestrial               | *0681106 |
| Nighthawks                          | 0101105  |
| The Brady Bunch Movie               | *1381003 |
| Under Siege                         | *1077908 |
| Tank Girl                           | *1389600 |
| Major Payne                         | *1411404 |
| Bridge On The River Kwai (Restored) | *1143809 |
| The Adventures Of Baron Munchausen  | *0594309 |
| Ferris Bueller's Day Off            | *0427302 |
| Four Weddings And A Funeral         | *1302900 |
| Higher Learning                     | *1381805 |
| Total Recall                        | *1286103 |
| The Silence Of The Lambs            | 0805309  |

|                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Bram Stoker's Dracula         | *1102904 |
| A Clockwork Orange            | *1356005 |
| The Shadow                    | *1297001 |
| Legend                        | 0218008  |
| The River Wild                | *1336304 |
| Natural Born Killers          | *1327709 |
| New Jersey Drive              | *1428903 |
| Little Women (1994)           | *1372903 |
| A Little Princess (1995)      | *1404201 |
| The Bodyguard                 | *1105907 |
| Losing Isaiah                 | *1413400 |
| Drop Zone                     | *1364306 |
| Priscilla Queen Of The Desert | *1345206 |
| Nobody's Fool                 | *1382902 |
| Just Cause                    | *1386408 |

### NEW RELEASES

|                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Farinelli                            | *1381300 |
| French Kiss                          | *1439603 |
| An American Werewolf In London       | *1453703 |
| Little Odessa                        | 1423003  |
| Marooned                             | *0151803 |
| Kiss Of Death (1994)                 | *1422906 |
| Panther                              | *1434505 |
| Tales From The Hood (Deluxe Edition) | *1440502 |
| Tommy Boy                            | *1433903 |
| Top Gun (Remastered)                 | *1429406 |
| Village Of The Damned (1995)         | *1429208 |
| The Wrong Trousers: A Grand Day Out  | *1429307 |
| The Quick And The Dead (1995)        | *1411107 |
| 2001: A Space Odyssey                | *0844308 |
| Goodfellas                           | *0969808 |
| Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (1994)   | *1363803 |
| Timecop                              | *1332204 |

Here's a great way to build a collection of your favorite movies - on laserdisc! Just write in the numbers of the 3 laserdiscs you want for \$1.00 each, plus shipping and handling. In exchange, you simply agree to buy four more laserdiscs in the next two years, at regular Club prices (currently as low as \$29.95, plus shipping and handling)-and you may cancel membership at any time after doing so. What's more, you can get still one more movie for the low price of \$19.95 and have less to buy later (see complete details in coupon).

**Free Magazine** sent every four weeks (up to 13 times a year) reviewing our Director's Selection - plus scores of alternate choices, including many lower-priced laserdiscs. And you may also receive Special Selection mailings up to four times a year. (That's up to 17 buying opportunities a year.)

**Buy only what you want!** If you want the Director's Selection, do nothing - it will be sent automatically. If you prefer an alternate selection, or none at all, just mail the response card always provided by the date specified. And

you'll always have 14 days to decide; if not, you may return the selection at our expense.

**Money-Saving Bonus Plan.** If you continue your membership after fulfilling your obligation, you'll be eligible for our generous bonus plan. It enables you to enjoy great savings on the movies you want - for as long as you decide to remain a member!

**10-Day Risk-Free Trial** We'll send details of the Club's operation with your introductory package. If not satisfied, return everything within 10 days at our expense for a full refund and no further obligation.

For fastest service, use your credit card and call us toll-free 24 hours a day:

**1-800-538-2233** Dept. 20S



Entertaining America... One Person at a Time.®

### Columbia House Laserdisc Club

Dept. 20S, P.O. Box 1112, Terre Haute, Indiana 47811-1112

Yes, please enroll me under the terms outlined in this advertisement. As a member, I need to buy only 4 more selections, at regular Club prices, in the next 2 years.

Send me these 3 laserdiscs for \$1.00 each-plus \$1.50 each shipping and handling (total \$7.50)

|       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
|-------|-------|-------|

### BUY YOUR FIRST SELECTION NOW-AND HAVE LESS TO BUY LATER!

Also, send me my first selection for \$19.95, plus \$1.50 shipping/handling, which I'm adding to my \$7.50 payment (total \$28.95). I then need to buy only 3 more (instead of 4) in the next 2 years.

**Please Check How Paying:**  My check is enclosed A35/A37  
 Charge my introductory laserdiscs and future Club purchases to: A36/A38  
 MasterCard  Diners Club  AMEX  VISA  Discover

Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

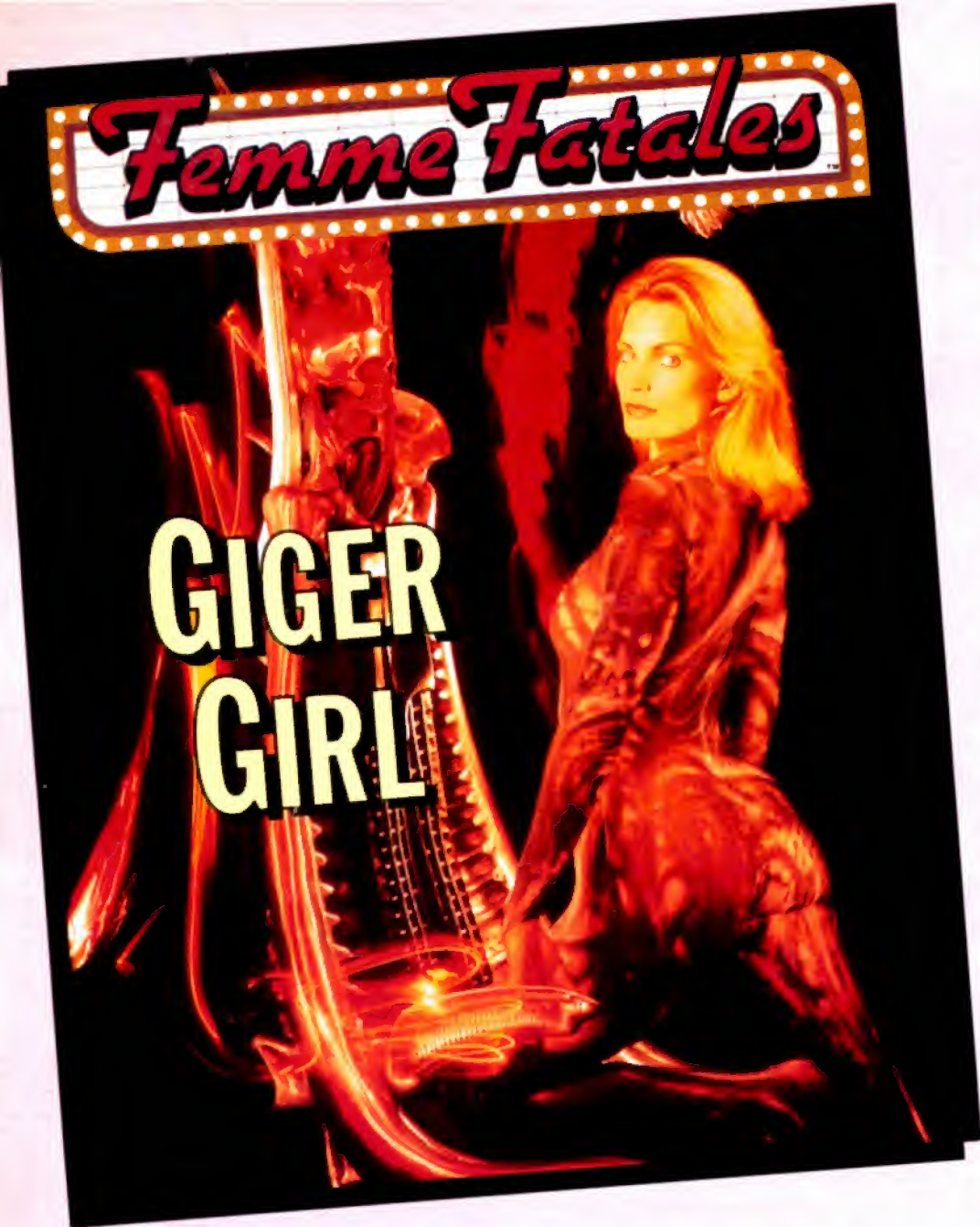
Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Do any of the following apply to you? (41)

I own a Personal Computer (1)  I own a PC with a CD-ROM (2)  I plan to buy a PC with a CD-ROM (3)

Note: This offer applies to first-time Laserdisc Club members only. Limit one per household. Columbia House reserves the right to request additional information, reject any application or cancel any membership. Offer limited to the continental U.S. (excluding Alaska). Applicable sales tax added to all orders. 7-412/96





# SUBSCRIBE NOW TO THE LUSCIOUS LADIES OF HORROR FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION

Call in your charter subscription today for eight issues and we'll send you by return mail a free 8x10 color photo (shown below), personally autographed by movie star Julie Strain, the sexy siren of FIT TO KILL and TEMPTRESS. An eight-issue subscription is \$34. Charter subscriptions are for new subscribers only.

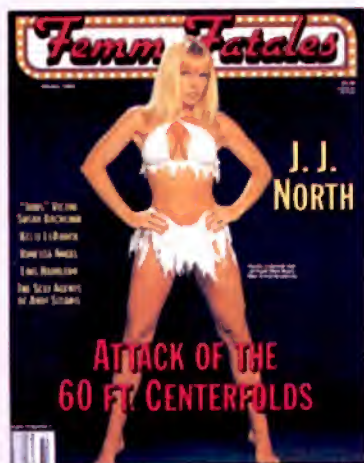
If you are either a current or lapsed subscriber, you can still take advantage of this special subscription offer by renewing or extending your subscription for sixteen more issues. (Foreign subscribers see coupon page 61.) Start with our next issue, Vol 4 No 8 (shown left), featuring our cover story on Natasha Henstridge, the sensuous star of SPECIES. Henstridge talks about playing the lethal extraterrestrial designed by Oscar-winner H. R. Giger, and poses in a form-fitting body stocking designed by Giger himself. One of the world's top fashion models, Henstridge reveals how she switched careers to become a movie actress, and provides a preview of her follow-up to SPECIES, the futuristic action epic ADRENALINE: THE RUSH.

You won't want to miss this exciting issue which includes our story on "The Rise and Fall of the Erotic Thriller," a genre that has faded from the video market but has resurfaced on cable TV. And actress/model Pamela Green chronicles her role in Michael Powell's classic horror, PEEPING TOM, plus much more! Subscribe today!

## Free Color 8x10 Photo, Personally Autographed by Sex Siren Julie Strain!



**Volume 3 Number 2**  
Erotic thriller empress, Julie Strain recalls her film career. Also an interview with Kathleen Turner and Asian Action heroines. **\$8.00**



**Volume 3 Number 3**  
J.J. North, the star of Roger Corman's ATTACK OF THE 60 FOOT CENTERFOLDS, measures up, also Darla Haun and others. **\$8.00**



**Volume 3 Number 4**  
Valentina Vargas talks about trying to best Pin Head in the evil and pain department in the new HELLRAISER. **\$8.00**



**Volume 4 Number 1**  
Cynthia Rothrock, the premier femme fatale action star reveals her "softer" side. Also lesbian lifestyles in the fantasy cinema. **\$8.00**



**Volume 4 Number 2**  
Features the career of '50s movie star Jeanne Carmen both on and off-screen. Plus Peggy Trentini, ex-Swedish Bikini Teamster. **\$8.00**



**Volume 4 Number 3**  
"The Vamp," Barbara Leigh reveals her provocative lifestyle; Stella Stevens chronicles her stellar career; plus Julie Strain's past. **\$8.00**



**Volume 4 Number 4**  
An updated chronicle featuring Elvira; Peterson's feud with Maila Nurmi (Vampira), the movie sequel and TV pilot. **\$8.00**



**Volume 4 Number 5**  
This issue's cover story features the beautiful GOLDENEYE Bond Girls Famke Janssen and Izabella Scorupco. **\$8.00**



**Volume 4 Number 6**  
See the original artwork that outraged the censors in the '50s as you read our cover story on the women of MARS ATTACKS. **\$8.00**

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE, 1-800-798-6515 OR USE ORDER FORM, SEE PAGE 61